

• DAVE WECKL: STYLE AND ANALYSIS •

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WILLIAM KENNEDY

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• BOBBY ROCK

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WILLIAM KENNEDY

Through his jazz chart-topping band, the Yellowjackets, rising drum star William Kennedy is thrilling audiences with his musical playing, serious technique, and thoroughly fresh approach. In this exclusive interview, MD digs a little deeper, and inspects what all the chit-chat is about.

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Nelson drummer Bobby Rock sees his fitness-minded lifestyle as inseparable from his performance on the drums. In this interview, this unusual player takes us behind the scenes of his own success and that of his hot new band.

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Akira Tana has tastefully supported jazzers like Kenny Barron, Sonny Rollins, Phil Woods, Jim Hall, and Dizzy Gillespie for years. Now he and master bass man Rufus Reid are making some sounds with their own group, TanaReid. Here Akira talks about jazz from the bottom up.

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BY ROBYN FLANS

EDITOR'S OVERVIEW



A Sound Collection



Back in 1986, *MD* introduced its very first *Sound Supplement*. The thinking behind the *Sound Supplement* series was simple: to help you better comprehend certain drumming concepts by not only reading about them in *MD*, but by being able to hear them as well. Needless to say, the *Sound Supplements* have always been among *MD*'s most popular features.

Of course, all good ideas do have their minor drawbacks. First, being flexible vinyl records—out of necessity for binding into a magazine—they do tend to damage if mishandled, and can easily be misplaced once they're separated from the magazine. Secondly, due to the nature of the material itself, vinyl recordings never really could withstand long-term, repeated playings.

All of the above factors resulted in readers asking if we'd ever consider putting six years of *Sound Supplement* text, musical examples, and recordings into one complete collection. Many suggested how much easier it would be to have the series in one handy package, rather than having to search through tons of old *MD*s to find one particular *Sound Supplement*. Well, I'm happy to say that the *MD* editors felt it was a very worthwhile idea, and immediately went to work on doing just that. The new *Modern Drummer Sound Supplement Collection* includes a 32-page book with the original text and music, along with a 60-minute cassette containing the original recordings.

For those who may have missed any of them—or simply forgotten—*MD*'s *Sound Supplement* series has included Neil Peart performing his "Pieces Of Eight," Andy Newmark demonstrating drums in the recording studio, and Peter Erskine's fine example of hi-hat playing. We've also had Rod Morgenstein on "Spicing Up Beats," Dave Weckl's "Spur Of The Moment"—with a second version minus drums so you can play along—and Gregg Bissonette's super performance with Brandon Fields. And we've had Terry Bozzio's "Soloing On Ostinatos," Jonathan Mover's "Put Up Or Shut Up," Simon Phillips' incredible "V8" solo, and a classic live recording of Phil Collins' and Chester Thompson's drum duet. For all those who've asked, they're now all together in this brand new *MD* compilation advertised elsewhere in this issue.

Our thanks to the many *MD* readers who alerted us to their needs and suggested that we move forward on this project. We think the *Modern Drummer Sound Supplement Collection* is a pretty useful item for the serious drummer, and we are hopeful you'll like what we've done with it.

MODERN DRUMMER

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READERS' PLATFORM



Manu Katche

Sensitivity, sophistication, and style: That's Manu Katche. Teri Saccone's interview with Manu in your August issue allowed him to express himself verbally almost as well as he does musically. I'm constantly amazed that more drummers aren't aware of Manu; I suppose it's because his versatility leads him to work with so many artists rather than being a member of a "hot" band. But perhaps his solo album will help to further establish him as the creative artist he truly is. Thanks for the great feature.

Frank Tuolemene
Corvallis OR

Here's The Rap On Chuck Morris

Chuck be happenin'...Chuck be hot...
Chuck got da gig and you did not.
Chuck be smokin'...Chuck be cool...

MD did his story 'cause they ain't no fool.
Chuck be a killer when he's on his drums...

Makin' everybody else just sound like bums.

To read all about Chuck was my wish-
Thanks for the story in the August ish.

DJ Jazzy Fresh MC Rabinovitch
White Plains NY

Zildjian Responds

In response to the letter from Thomas Harriel III in the August issue, we at Zildjian would like to assure "heartland" drummers that we are trying to make events like Zildjian Days as widely accessible as possible. In 1990 we did, indeed, favor "either shore and Chicago" as Mr.

Harriel pointed out. Since no one in history had ever tried five such events in a single year, we felt that targeting the larger markets would make the series available to the largest number of drumming enthusiasts.

We do intend to continue presenting Zildjian Days, and plan on new locations for them. While we can't promise that Cincinnati will be a host city (as Mr. Harriel requested), you never know. We do promise, however, that we will continue to work hard at presenting drummers with quality events to further their enthusiasm and education. In the meantime, we would like to thank everyone in the drumming community for their support and interest.

Michael A. Morse
National Promotions Manager
Zildjian West
Studio City CA

Taking The Plunge Down Under

I was knocked out by Richard Watson's article "Taking The Plunge Into Electronics" in the July '91 issue. I recently invested in a *midik.I.T.I. Pro*, an Alesis *SRI6* machine, and a bunch of triggers. I have studied up on MIDI drumming, and I'm having the best time playing my electronics "live" to Australia each day. As an "older" player, it was quite a step to go electronic, and I could relate very well to the points Richard made in his article. Many of *MD's* articles relating to electronics have dealt with *how* to use MIDI; I felt that Richard's article focused on *why* we should use it. Great job!

Will Dower
Sydney, Australia

(Editor's note: Will is the drummer for the Midday Australia television variety show, broadcast live daily across Australia.)

Percussion In The Woods

Hi! I recently moved my business and myself to rural New Hampshire from urban New Jersey, and I love it. I've discovered that percussion instruments are used a lot here, from claves, congas, and bongos—to spoons! I thought some of those were gone as far as popularity went, but not here. By fitting these instruments into my playing, I've fine-tuned my ear for nuances of tone, notes, and accents. I recommend them highly to any drummers trying to clean up and/or color up their playing.

By the way, I was pleased to find many retailers here carrying your magazine—including a grocery store! I'd like to thank the folks at *Modern Drummer* for keeping me up on what's happening in the drumming world while I'm here in New Hampshire.

Dave Barnes
Rumney NH

We Won't Get Fooled Again

To err is human; to do it twice in one sentence is just a wee bit embarrassing. In this past August's Kenney Jones *Update*, not only did the misspelling of Roger Daltrey's name slip by our normally watchful eyes, but so did Pete Townshend's. Sorry, Pete and Roger.



Vic Firth

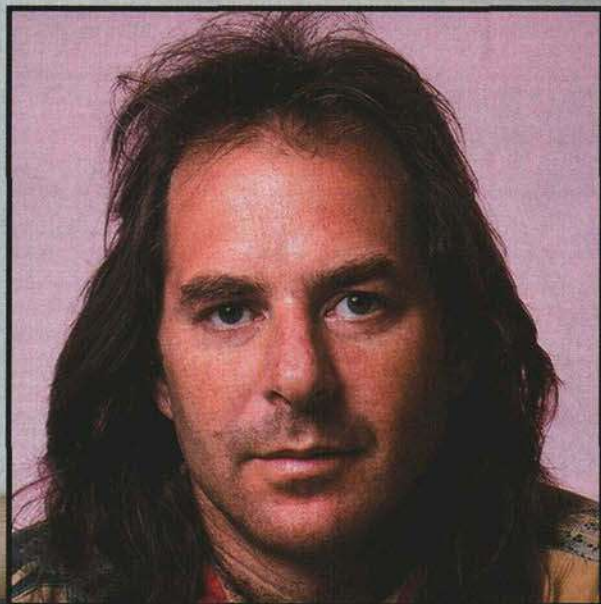
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Rod Morgenstein



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Dave Samuels

Sitting in his hotel room prior to a Spyro Gyra concert, Dave Samuels wears an expression not unlike someone who has been up all night with a screaming baby. "The plane Spyro flew down here on," he explains, "was full of guys on their way to a barber-shop quartet convention, and they spent the whole time singing."

But as the conversation turns to Spyro Gyra, Dave shakes off the effects of his "Sweet Adeline" overload. "We're touring to support the *Collection* album," he says, "so the sets are mostly older material. Guitarist Julio Fernandez has re-joined the band, and we have a new drummer, Joel Rosenblatt. The new blood is rejuvenating the music, and the performances have been really exciting."

Dave is also excited about his new solo album, *Natural Selection*, his debut release on GRP records. And was it GRP's idea to link Samuels with the Yellowjackets, who serve as the rhythm section on his new album? "Interestingly enough, that had nothing to do with it," he replies. "A few years ago, the record *Four Corners* really opened my ears to their music. I thought it would be really great to play with that rhythm section of Russell Ferrante [keyboards], Jimmy Haslip [bass], and Will Kennedy [drums]. Then I got to know the guys because Spyro and the Jackets did some shows together."

Samuels and the Yellowjackets spent three days in the studio together this past January. "It was a real treat for me," Dave says. "On my previous albums, I put together rhythm sections from people I thought might work well together, but this was a *band*. I was guesting with *them*," Dave laughs. "There was an instant rapport among them in terms of how to play the music, and it seemed unbelievably natural."

If there is a single word to describe *Natural Selection*, that word is "rhythmic." "Well," Dave responds, "I'm a drummer who happens to play a keyboard instrument—that's how I look at my style. I play a lot of marimba, which is even more rhythm-based than vibes, and the tunes I write have that kind of underpinning. And Will Kennedy is very present on this album. His drum sound is mixed way up, and he also wrote one of the tunes."

Samuels is especially pleased with the overall feel of the album. "It sounds as if we were all in a room playing together—and we were," Dave says. "That's the tradition I come from: You get together to create the music. It's not something you construct from a series of building blocks. It's everything happening at once."

• Rick Mattingly

Billy Ward

Billy Ward says it took him a while to get used to the Knack, because he got to play so much during the recording of their new, self-titled album. "The drumming is really over the top," he says. "It's really Keith Moon-ish at times. There were times when they said, 'Play more fills through the guitar solo.' When I was a kid I did that, until I learned to make an incredible pocket for everyone else. This is more like playing with wild Gypsy abandon. I kept saying in rehearsal, '[producer] Don Was is not going to go for this.' But they kept saying he liked the Knack, and this was the Knack. It was a real challenge."

Of their album, Billy says, "Most of it is one take, and the rest is two takes. It was a great vibe. We just slammed through it. We rehearsed quite a bit before that. We had all the songs exactly

where we wanted them. Don pretty much stayed out of our way. He's very secure and he's got huge ears, so he really let us be who we are. He would only step in to add or change something if he had a problem with it or if he could see a better picture. If he had something to add, it was as if your best friend was asking you to do a favor for him.

"The whole record was done in 28 days," Ward continues. "What's interesting about this record is that I like my work on it, and usually I never want to hear what I've played again. On some tracks I feel I could have done better, but then I always feel that way. 'Shine' was a



run-through, and I wasn't even in that kamikaze mode yet. But we did the run-through and Don said, 'That was unbelievable, that's it,' and I was going, 'Wait a minute.'"

Billy also recently worked on Mark Jordan's last album, *Cow*, and cut three tracks with Robbie Robertson.

• Robyn Flans

Ben Holmes

"Life is one big tour," says 27-year-old Ben Holmes, drummer for Queen Ida & Her Zydeco Band. Whether a tour takes Queen Ida to the New Orleans Jazz Festival or around the world, Ben is packed with Gretsch set, sticks, and practice pads, and is ready and rarin' to go-

Traveling and zydeco music are within Ben's element. He had no trouble changing from his original rock/R&B style to zydeco. "The feel of the music is different, but the structure is the same as a lot of rock. You have a heavy backbeat, which is what zydeco is—a lot of two-steps. For the most part, you just have that 'boom-chick' happening. If you listen to the early Clifton Chenier recordings, you can really hear that old R&B sound, and he was one of the inventors of zydeco."

One of the most exciting tours for Ben



has been Queen Ida's recent tour of Africa. "It was great," he beams. "First

we went to Algeria, then Senegal, the Ivory Coast, Congo, Togo, and Ghana. The most incredible thing was an event on Sunday afternoons in Togo called a 'Tam-Tam.' All of these people who have moved from the small villages to the city gather together. They form a square in the middle of the street and play music for hours. It's all percussion, chanting, and dancing. There were about 200 people involved in the ritual the day I saw them. I was there for about an hour, and they never stopped playing. Not only was it cool to listen to, but it was cool to watch, because it was so synchronized. It was really wild, just tremendous. I'd like to hang my hat in Africa for a while. Really, I could hang my hat just about anywhere, as long as there is music happening."

• **Georgia Antonopoulos**

Tico Torres

Because Bon Jovi the band has been less active than Bon Jovi the singer, drummer Tico Torres has been less visible than usual lately. But Tico hasn't been sitting around, waiting for work: He's involved in several new projects—the solo album by Bon Jovi guitarist Richie Sambora, for one. "It seems like we recorded that in a million different studios," Tico comments. "We have Neil Dorfsman producing [Dire Straits, Paul McCartney], Tony Levin on bass, and Dave Bryan [Bon Jovi] on keyboards, and our special guest is Eric Clapton. It has kind of a blues/R&B vibe—real good stuff."

Tico has also been doing sessions during the past year, working on such diversified projects as the upcoming Stevie Nicks release, and with percussionist Gumbi of Al DiMeola's band,

whose new album Tico describes as having a "Latin/jazz vibe." Additionally, he worked on new releases for Dave Mason and keyboardist Nicky Hopkins. "I've been keeping busy," he admits, "but at the same time, I didn't want to overwork. The last road tour with Bon Jovi was so long—four years—so it was nice to just kick back and relax to collect my thoughts and enjoy life a little bit."

And what of Bon Jovi's future? Well, they regrouped and began recording a new album this past summer. Tico says that the band would like to hit the road again around March of '92. "Then I'll be on the road forever," he laughs. "So I enjoy times like these when I can."

• **Teri Saccone**

Bill Marshall

Bill Marshall enjoys the double duty he works—backing Hank Williams, Jr. on his dates, and playing with Hank's back-up band, the Bama Band, which is an entity of its own. While Hank, Jr. only did 50 dates in '89, Bill estimates the Bama Band played an additional 120. But both, he says, provide their own challenges.

"With the band I can spread out a little bit more because there's not any one boss there. We all experiment and create together. Also the pressure isn't as high with the band. And live, the Bama Band opens up for people. With Hank, people open for us."

Bill says that the Bama Band's last album, *Taking Off The Edge*, is very representative of their sound. "Jimmy Bowen produced it, and since he produced probably 15 of Hank's records, he knew where we were coming from."

When he's off the road, Bill says he makes a point of practicing three hours a day. "I have three kits set up—one large double bass kit, one that's a little bit bigger than a bebop kit, and an electric kit. I'll go from one to the other. I live out in the country on 62 acres, my house is 200 yards off the road, and I'm by myself. So I have plenty of time and space to practice."

• **Robyn Flans**



Shannon Powell

Big band and swing is alive and flourishing, thanks in part to Harry Connick, Jr. Drummer Shannon Powell is an integral part of Connick's young band. He is a leading figure on the New Orleans jazz scene and has an affinity for all the styles that Harry embraces.

Powell started playing as a street performer back in New Orleans at the age of nine, playing traditional jazz with the Hurricane Brass Band. By eleven he was gigging professionally with the Danny Barker Jazzy Hounds. And by fourteen,

he made his first trip to New York City to play percussion on record for trombonist Scotty Hill.

Shannon has played with New Orleans' finest, and has become one of that city's most sought-after drummers. Yet he admits that playing with Harry Connick, Jr. has been the pinnacle of his career thus far. "I'm very happy with Harry," Shannon explains. "He's a great guy to work for, and he's given me a lot of exposure. He does a lot of different things in the show—instrumentals, trad jazz, big

band—but sometimes when we do New Orleans Dixieland music, it's the biggest part of the show. People go *crazy* for that.

"I've known Harry since he was a kid," Powell continues, "and when it came time for him to find a drummer, he tracked me down all the way to Hamburg, Germany, where I had my own New Orleans band set up. We've had our differences in the past, but we worked things out. I feel very blessed and fortunate to be in the position I'm in."

• Teri Saccone

Christopher Mancinelli

For Christopher Mancinelli, who helped start the group BLOC eight years ago, their first major label (A&M) album is very exciting, and he's happy with all the tracks.

"They all have our sound," he says. "When you listen to them, there is a lot of variety, but there's also a common thread. My favorite tunes are 'Follow' and 'No Shadow,' because they're a lot of fun to play and I think they groove the hardest. I really just love to play a rhythm and groove. I like 'Not A Secret Dance' because I think that from a drummer's standpoint, it's pretty innovative. It's just a very unusual groove. A lot of drummers think it's in an odd time, but it is in 4/4. 'Dying Fires' is another favorite. It's a real wide-open sweeping ballad with a very atmospheric drum part. I also love 'Free Zone.' It's another real fun one to play, a kind of balls-out funk number.

"We wrote everything together," Christopher continues, "and I'd say eighty percent of the tunes on the record were written

from the groove and the rhythm section up. We usually have the instrumental stuff done and then one or two of us will take a lyrical idea and try to finish it. There were probably three or four tunes that were actually started from a drum part."

Mancinelli says that the album was recorded pretty much live. "Any fixes that were done were very minor," he explains. "We rehearse incessantly to work out our parts, so we were really prepared when we went into the studio. Everything was done within the first five or six takes, and we basically recorded a song a day."

In his time away from the band, Christopher operates a home studio in which he records music for documentaries for the Long Beach Museum of Art and commercials for clients like CNN and the Discover channel.

• Robyn Flans

News...

Emil Richards has been working on a few movie soundtracks lately, including *Hudson Hawk*, *Robin Hood—Prince Of Thieves*, *Return To The Blue Lagoon*, *The Prince & The Pauper*, and *Hook*. Emil was also in Sardinia in July and Hawaii in August, playing jazz vibes for what he calls "a restful diversion."

David Stefanelli on new release by RTZ, a group featuring former Boston vocalist Brad Delp and guitarist Barry Goudreau.

Richie Morales has just

completed Al DiMeola's new album, as well as playing on the film soundtrack for David Mamet's *Homicide*.

Mark Zonder is in Toronto working on the next Fates Warning album.

Chad Cromwell played on the latest Joe Walsh release, *Ordinary Average Guy*. Chad is also currently touring with Joe.

Scott Klein recently on tour with Engelbert Humperdinck.

Congratulations to **Connie Kay** and the Modern Jazz Quartet: They're celebrating

their 40th anniversary together this year.

Johnny Dee has just finished tracks for a new Britny Fox album, due out this fall.

Harvey Sorgen recently on tour with Hot Tuna. He has a new instructional video due out in September.

Greg D'Angelo recently left White Lion. He has been replaced by former Y&T drummer **Jimmy DeGrasso**.

Jack White is playing on the first single from the new Eddie Money release, *Another Day In LA*.

Tommy Campbell is currently on the road with the Manhattan Transfer. They've covered Europe, with Japan to follow.

Artimus Pyle on recently released *Lynyrd Skynyrd 1991*.

Congratulations to **Tommy Wells** and Carolyn Breda on the birth of their son Dylan Thomas Breda Wells, and to Kim and **Chet McCracken** on the birth of their daughter Eva Grace.

John Poe, ex of Guadalcanal Diary, on Love Tractor's *Galaxy Sound Systems*.



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ASK A PRO



Liberty DeVitto

Q I recently purchased Billy Joel's *Live At Yankee Stadium* tape, and I was really impressed with your drum work. I noticed that you play your snare with the butt of the stick. Is one stick heavier than the other, or do you just find that you get a better sound this way? Also, what sizes of Sabian cymbals do you use?

A. Bartholomew
Philadelphia PA

A Thanks for your questions. I do play with the butt of the stick, but only in my left hand. I believe that the sound you get on your snare drum is from: 1) head combination (top and bottom), 2) the material the snare is made of (wood or metal), 3) the depth of the snare, and 4) drumstick size. On the *Live At Yankee Stadium* video, I used a Tama birdseye maple piccolo snare with a Cana-Sonic *Power Play (No Overtone)* batter head and an Aquarian snare-side head, and I played with Pro-Mark *MS3* signature sticks.

Using the butt end with my left hand lets me get the full sound of the drum

and helps me get the solid rimshot that I use a lot. Also, I'm a hard hitter, and the stick lasts longer that way. With Billy, I do a lot of cross-stick playing, so using the butt end makes it easier to make that move.

My cymbals on the video are: a 12" AA splash, a 16" AA medium-thin crash, 15" *Sizzle Hats*, an 18" *AARock Crash*, an 18" HH *Rock Crash*, a 22" *AARock Ride*, and a 22" HH light ride. This combination worked great in that situation. In the studio, my cymbal sizes can vary. I believe in different setups for different applications.

Play along with my book/cassette package, *Off The Record*, distributed by Manhattan Music Publications, and feel how sometimes soft is better than hard, the tip is better than the butt, how a brush and a stick can be combined, and how different snare drums produce different sounds. Keep yourself open for different situations; it will make you a more versatile drummer.



Carl Palmer and Louie Bellson

Q After reading Kenny Aronoff's article on drum solos in the March 1990 issue of *MD*, I was inspired to ask two of my favorite drummers, Carl Palmer and Louie Bellson, if they would share their viewpoints on solos. Can you forward my request to them?

John Buccetti
Wallingford CT

A Carl:
Solos are very personal and emotional, and give me a lot of satisfaction when played well. It seems to be the best way to

express one's self when playing drums. Keeping time is very important, but for me, the solo goes just that much further toward understanding the "art of drumming." This art, to me, includes three elements: emotion, excitement, and technique.

A Louie:
Drum solos are very important. They should be improvised on the spot. Dynamics and continuity are also important. Remember, you are taking your audience on an excursion in rhythm. Make it musical and interesting. Make your drumset sound like an orchestra.



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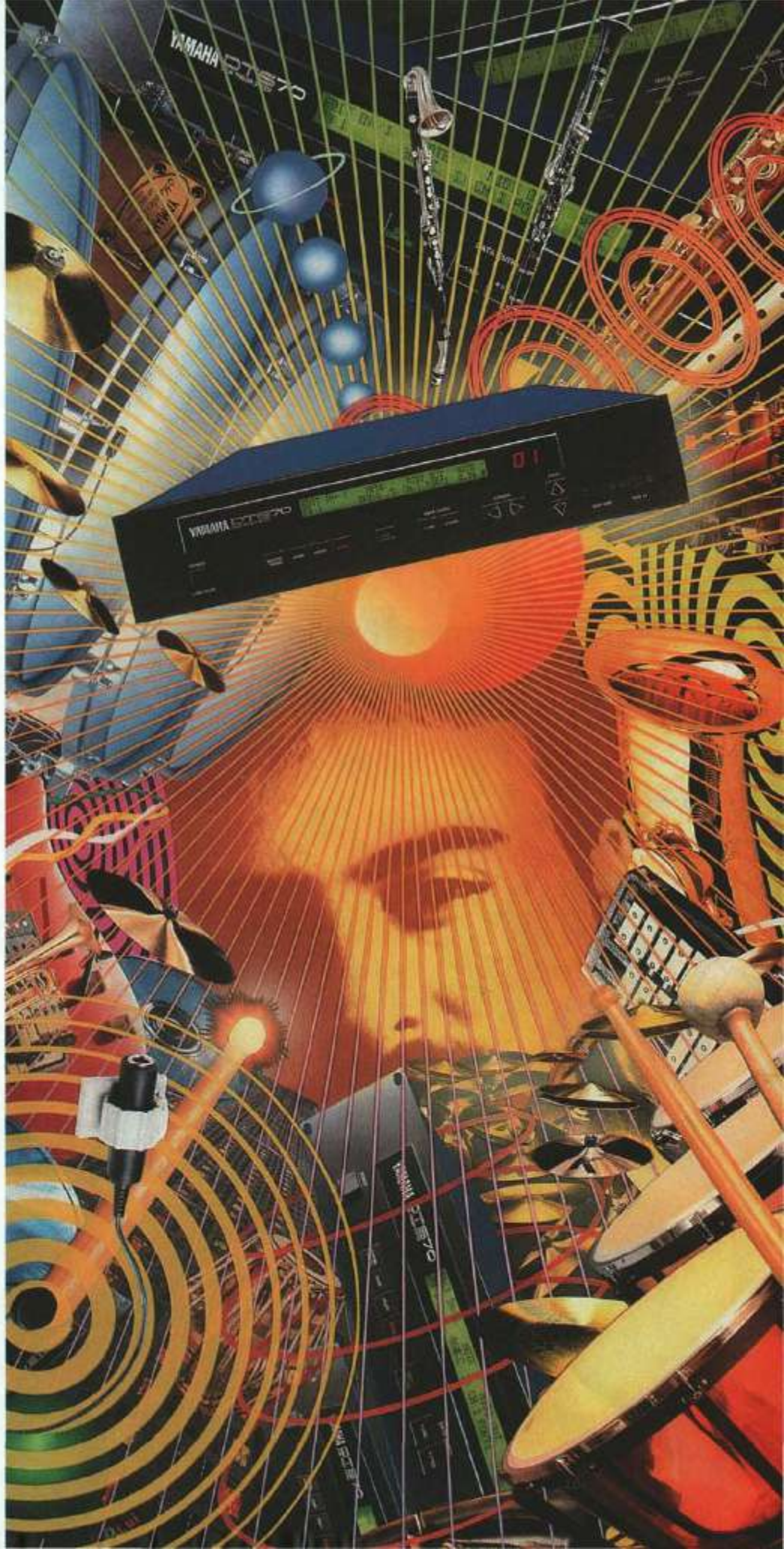
With the DTS70, you can access any sound, both MIDI and analog. You can stack, crossfade, or alternate up to 4 notes per input; create up to 32 note chains; and store up to 48 different performances. You can explore all parameters of music from right behind your drum set. Your only limitation is your own imagination.

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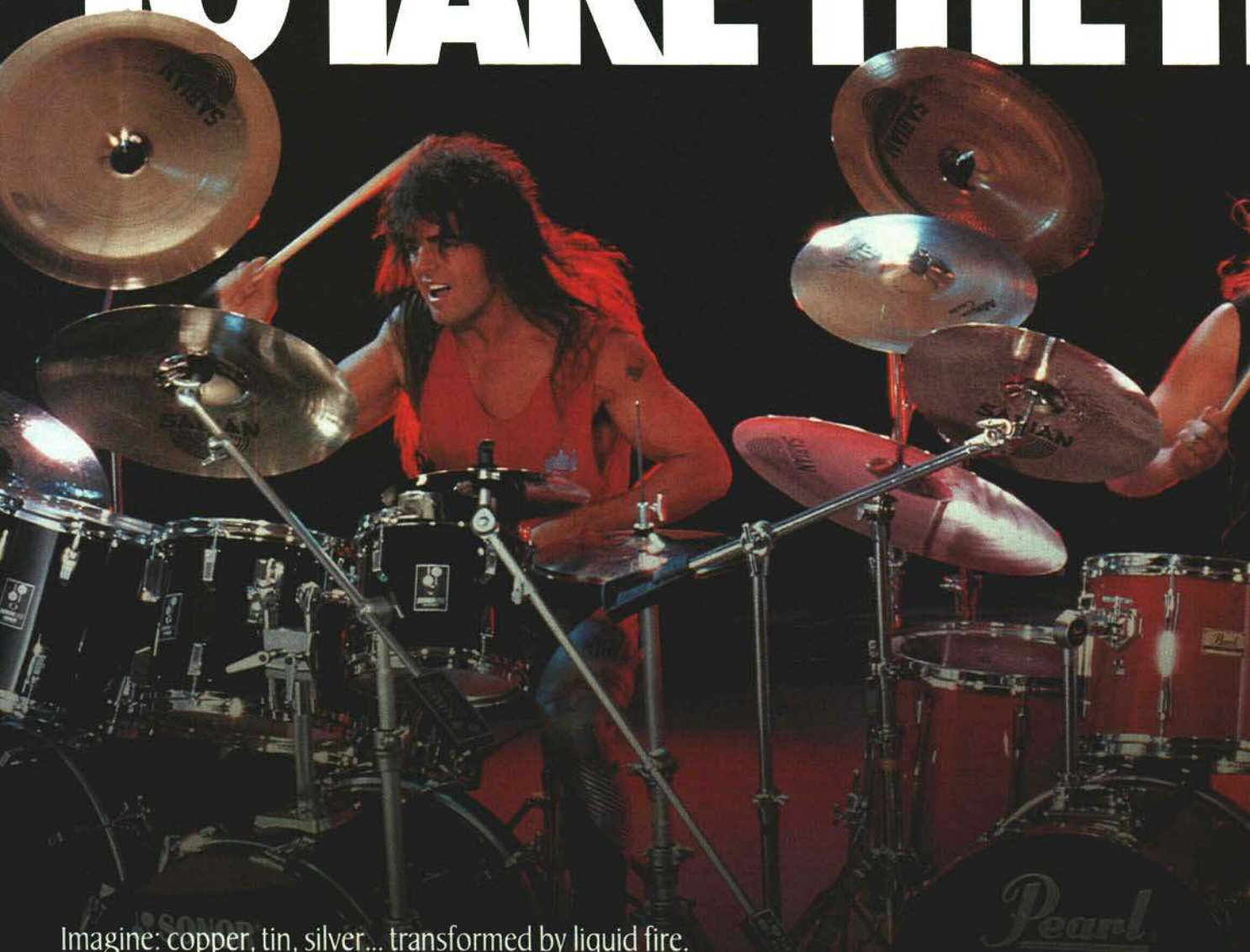
Isn't it time you entered the next dimension?

For a copy of the DTS70 brochure, contact your local music dealer or write to Yamaha Corporation of America, Band & Orchestral Division, 3445 East Paris Avenue S.E., P.O. Box 899, Grand Rapids, MI 49512-0899. In Canada: Yamaha Canada Music Ltd., 135 Milner Avenue, Scarborough, Ontario M1S 3R1

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IT'S QUESTIONABLE



Q SDX PADS WITH OCTAPAD?

Could Simmons *SDX* pads be used via the external input jacks on the Roland *Octapad*? If so, would all areas of the "zone-intelligent" pads be functional or only certain parts?

Robert Rice
Havertown PA

A According to Simmons drum technician Dennis Grzesik, "If I am not mistaken, the *Octapad* external input jacks are designed to accommodate a piezo-type pad, while the *SDX* pads are FSR (force sensing resistor) types designed to work exclusively in conjunction with the *SDX* console. The Simmons *Portakit* and *Silicon Mallet* are also equipped with FSR-type playing surfaces, but will not accommodate *SDX* pads. The *Octapad* external input jacks will, however, work with Simmons equipment fitted with standard piezo-type pads, such as the traditional Simmons tom and bass pads and *Drum Huggers*.

Q WHAT DOES BILL DETAMORE DO?

I have a question pertaining to a comment Gregg Bissonette made in your great "Tuning Up With The Pros" feature in the August issue. He stated that he has his "bearing edges done by Bill Detamore." What exactly does this mean? Also, can you tell me how to reach Bill Detamore?

Brian Levy
Los Angeles CA

A Bill Detamore is a drum customizer who performs various procedures on the bearing edges of drums in order to fine-tune their sound. One of these is called "trueing," which is making sure that the edges are absolutely flat and contact the drumhead evenly. Additionally, cutting the bearing edges at

specific angles will affect how much wood contacts the drumhead, and thereby affect the resonance, tone, and projection of the drum. For more specific information, contact Bill in care of his company, Pork Pie Drums, at 22015 De La Osa, Woodland Hills, CA 91364.

Q HOW DO YOU STRIP AND PAINT A WORLD SERIES KIT?

I have a Pearl *World Series* kit with a chrome finish. I'm interested in painting the kit. Can you tell me if it's possible to remove the chrome covering safely, and if it is, would doing so change the sound of the drums at all? Also, any tips on preparing the drums for paint would be very much appreciated.

Mark Lizyness
Rockwood MI

A We referred your question to Pearl's Ken Austin, who responds: "Mark, thanks for the inquiry. It is possible to safely remove the covering of your *World Series* kit and paint the shell. If you have never done this before, it might behoove you to discuss the process with a Pearl dealership in your area that does repair work. Without having the drum in front of a qualified repair technician or custom drum artist, any direction or methodology prescribed on my part may be fruitless, costly, and damaging. Start at your pro shop.

"Regarding sound changes, the drums, when painted, *may* resonate a bit more. (The theory that covered drums are 'choked' is as old as the art of drumming.) Unless you have an extremely sophisticated ear, however, you will probably not hear any difference. My advice again is to see a pro and make the project both an educational experience and a worthwhile investment."

Q WHAT CLEANS CHARCOAL SHADOW DRUMS?

I recently invested in a set of Ludwig *Super Classic* drums, in Charcoal Shadow finish. I free-lance as well as play in my own band, and the accumulation of dust, smoke, and the occasional splash from a drink requires me to give my drums a thorough cleaning at least once a month. Are there any special precautions I should take or specific cleaners recommended to preserve the finish? This is my first experience with a finish of this type, and since I consider these drums an investment, it's my desire to maintain the beauty of the finish.

DA Mende
Green River WY

A Ludwig Product Specialist Dick Gerlach recommends *Lemon Pledge*, from Johnson's Wax, for use on Charcoal Shadow finishes. According to Dick, "It works like a miracle. Spray it on your cleaning cloth, wipe gently, and the finish looks like new. *Pledge* even seems to help take down minor scratches."

Q WHO OFFERS RACK BAGS?

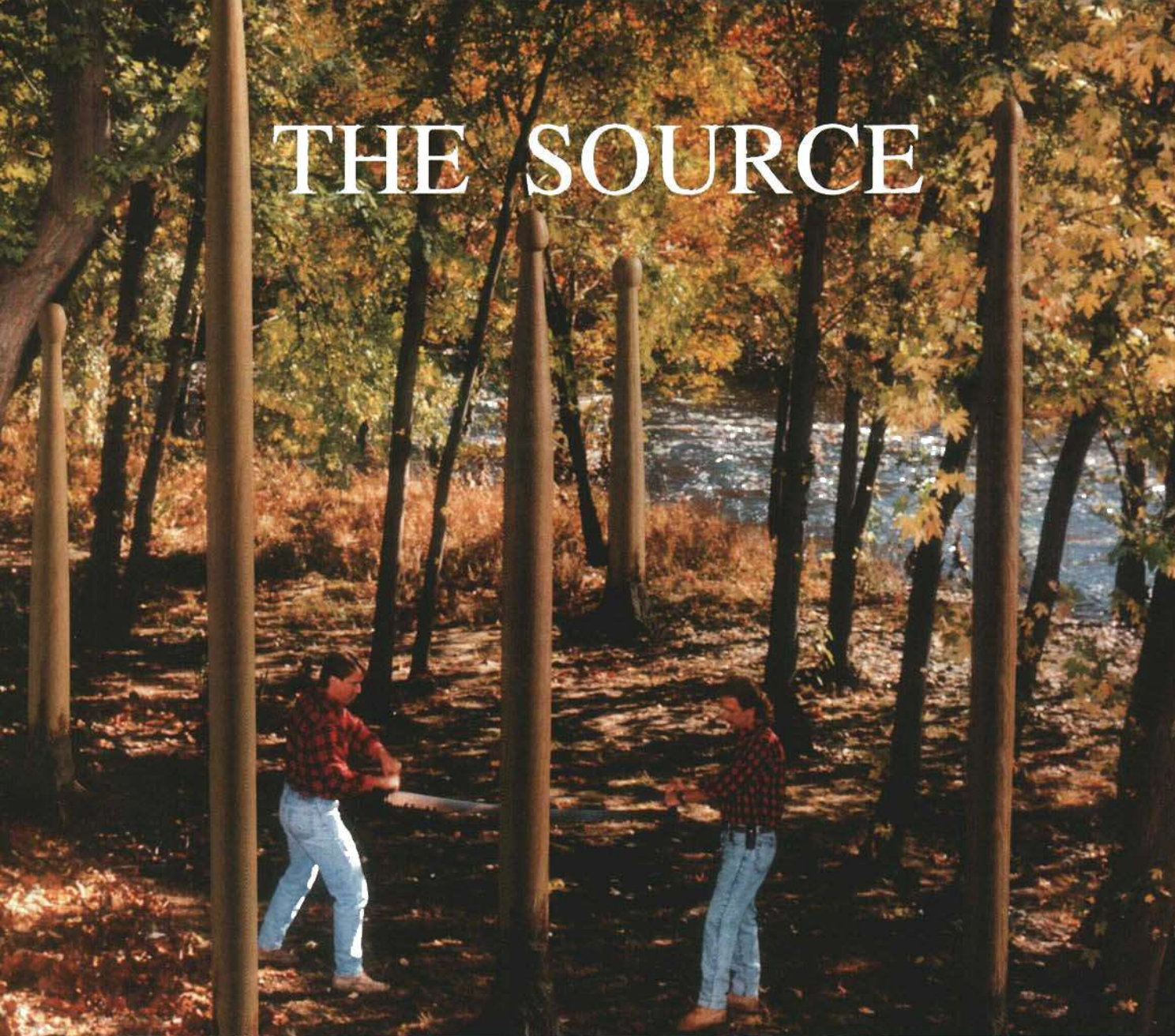
Does anyone make a transport bag for the Pearl *DR-2* Drum Rack? I have researched my problem ever since I bought my rack three years ago, but no one seems to make one.

Gene Skiba, Jr.
New Brighton MN

A Beato Musical Products offers hardware bags, in 62" and 70" lengths, that will easily accommodate drum racks. Impact Industries offers rack bags in 54" (with or without hard-shell insert) and 74" (no insert) lengths. Contact Beato at P.O. Box 725, Wilmington, CA 90748, and Impact at 333 Plumer Street, Wausau, WI 54401, or ask your drum retailer to check on these items for you.



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It's not that easy. Good wood is a must, but high quality sticks must be carefully crafted like any other precision tool. A good eye, a good ear, skilled experience and of course, using only the highest grade American hickory, oak and maple come together to make Vater one of the best stick makers in the world.

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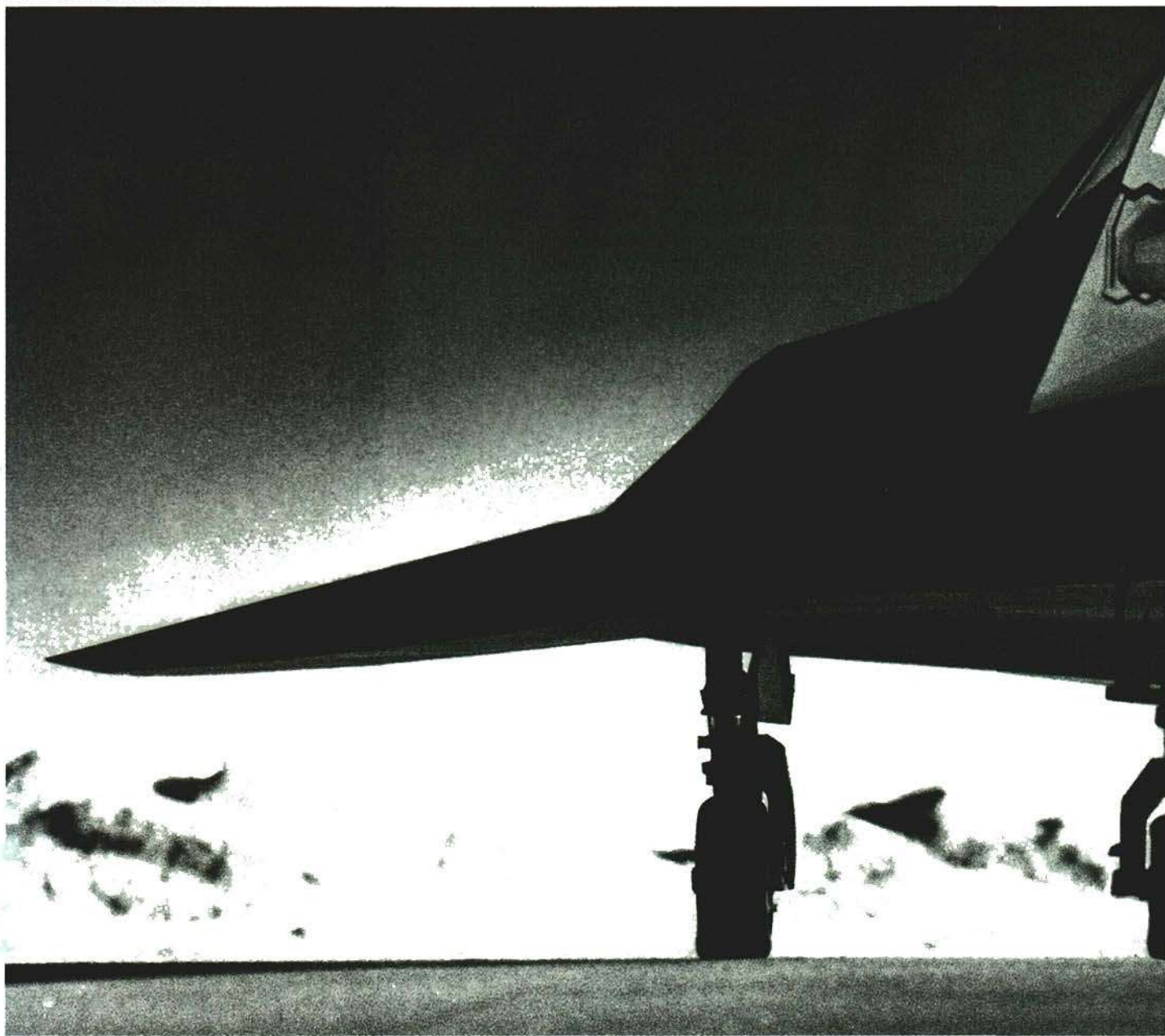
Vater has been making and designing sticks for over a decade and continues to manufacture sticks for some of the largest drum companies in the world. Vater has even made sticks for two of it's leading competitors!

The Vater family controls every step from wood selection to final testing in their own factory. As a matter of fact, about the only thing they don't do is cut down their own trees!



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THE HIGHER THE PERFORMANC

Compare Maxell's XLII-S to an ordinary cassette. An obvious difference is the size of the windows. Remember: there are no bay windows in rockets, but in houseboats there are.

That tiny little slit of a window allowed us room to build additional support into the cassette shell for

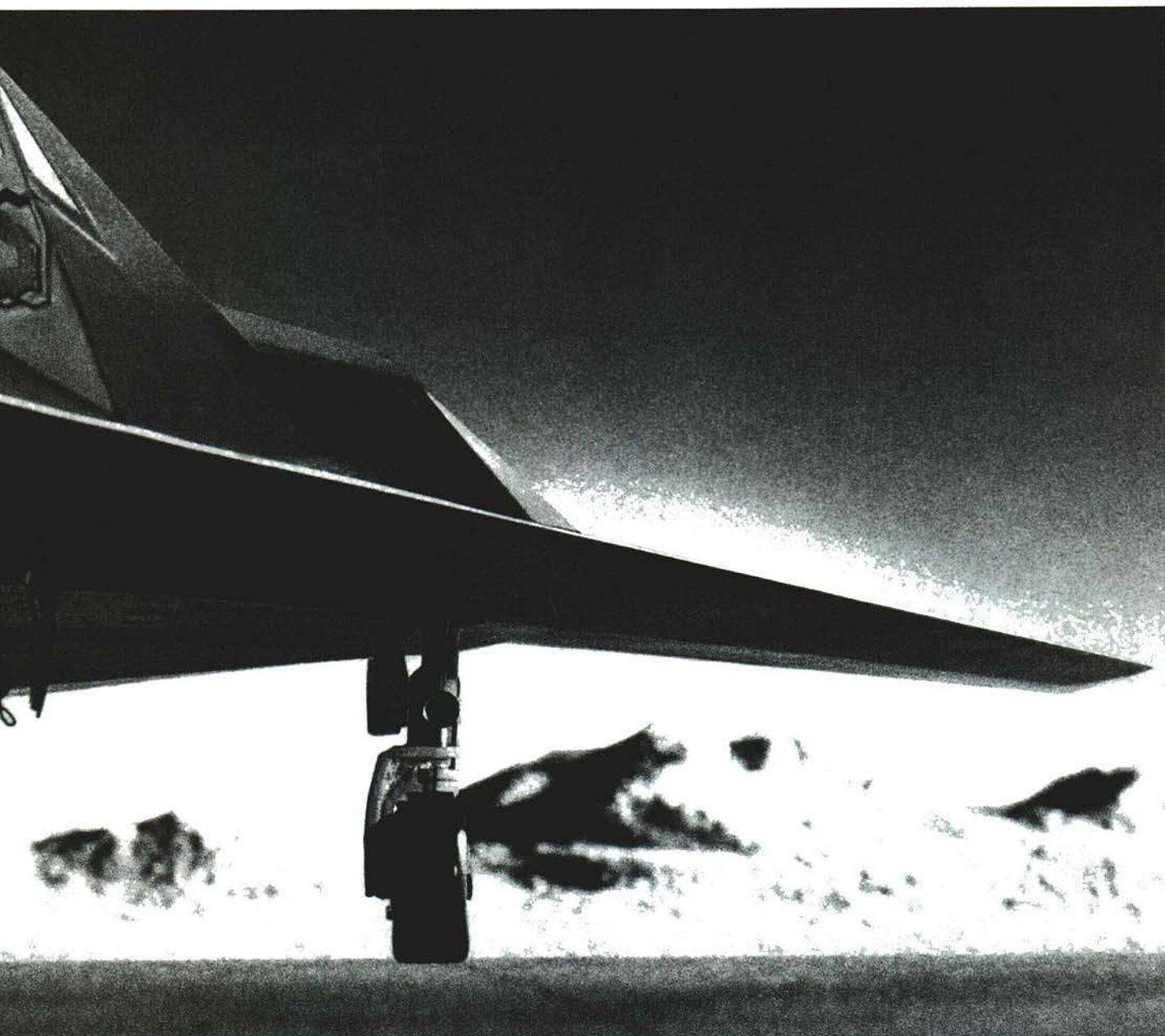
greater rigidity and durability.

The shell itself is a compound of ceramic and polymer resins. With 1.4 times the specific gravity of standard cassette shell material, it's anti-resonant, absorbs vibrations that can cause modulation noise.

Inside, the tape is formulated

with Black Magnetite—a higher energy magnetic material harnessed by Maxell engineers.

It contributes to the sound *CD Review* magazine described like this: "Bass response that doesn't stop, staggering dynamics, real music." And in their review of Type II tapes, they



E, THE SMALLER THE WINDOWS.

rated XLII-S, "Head, shoulders and torso above the rest."

Of course, an XLII-S cassette is going to cost you more than one with big, low-performance windows and matching sound.

But not so much more that you have to go to Congress for it.




TAKE YOUR MUSIC TO THE MAX.



The Yellowjackets'

William Kennedy

ver the past five years there's been a buzz building about William Kennedy. Ever since he signed up with the Yellowjackets in '86, the word's been getting around about this young, gifted player who, along with his fellow band-mates, is stretching instrumental jazz in new directions. If You're not familiar with the Yellowjackets, a basic description of their music might read something like this: involved compositions that, in a unique and fresh way, touch on elements of swing, Afro-Cuban, funk, and world music, played and improvised over by world-class musicians. Obviously it's an exacting position for a drummer.

In trying to describe Will's playing with the Yellowjackets, one word keeps coming to mind: musical. Will Kennedy is probably one of the most musical drummers playing today. Sometimes describing a drummer as being "musical" connotes a lack of chops, but Will has a tremendous amount of technique to draw from, and his understanding of all styles is ever-growing. With those attributes alone he's garnered a reputation as a drumming whiz. Even so, Will's greatest asset is still his musicality—his touch.

Will has applied that winning touch to the Grammy-awarded Yellowjackets, recording four albums so far. And with their most recent release, *Greenhouse*, the quartet reached #1 on the jazz charts. *Greenhouse* is the band's most mature offering to date, and Will rises to the occasion. He shines on every cut, including the songo-esque "Freedomland," the haunting 7/4 title track, the 6/8 Nanigo cymbal-patterned "Seven Stars," the contempo-bop "Brown Zone," and the country/jazz fiddle tune "Freda," to mention only a few. All along the way Will's playing—musically probing different styles and elements—raises the music to a higher level.

By William F. Miller

Photos By Ebet Roberts

WFM: Let's say that, for some reason, you decided to give up your gig with the Yellowjackets and had to describe to the drummer replacing you what qualities he would need to make it in this band. What do the Yellowjackets require of a drummer musically?

WK: Wow, that's a good question. The type of drummer the Yellowjackets need is a player who has knowledge of a variety of styles—a person who isn't so specialized in one particular idiom or style of music. This band also requires the drummer to take chances musically, to not be afraid to stretch out within different styles. For example, if the band puts together a tune that has a standard bossa nova-type groove, the drummer has to have the ability to understand the typical feel, and create something new and unique with it. I don't know if I always succeed at doing that, but it's something I'm very concerned about—playing something that hasn't been played before.

One thing I've found very important for this band, and something that's probably true for any musical situation, is keeping an open mind, staying open to new things, because that's the way you grow as a musician. That's sort of an unspoken requirement of the Yellowjackets, that's how we feel, that's our approach—ever evolving, ever growing—as a band and as individuals. Those are some pretty strong requirements. Oh, by the way, the drummer in this band has to be a nice guy. [laughs]

WFM: You just mentioned something that I've noticed about your playing; you seem to draw from many different styles so naturally. It might be something as subtle as a fill that just hints of a Latin thing, even though you're playing, say, a swing feel. And even more general than that, the Yellowjackets seem to enjoy mixing up the styles.

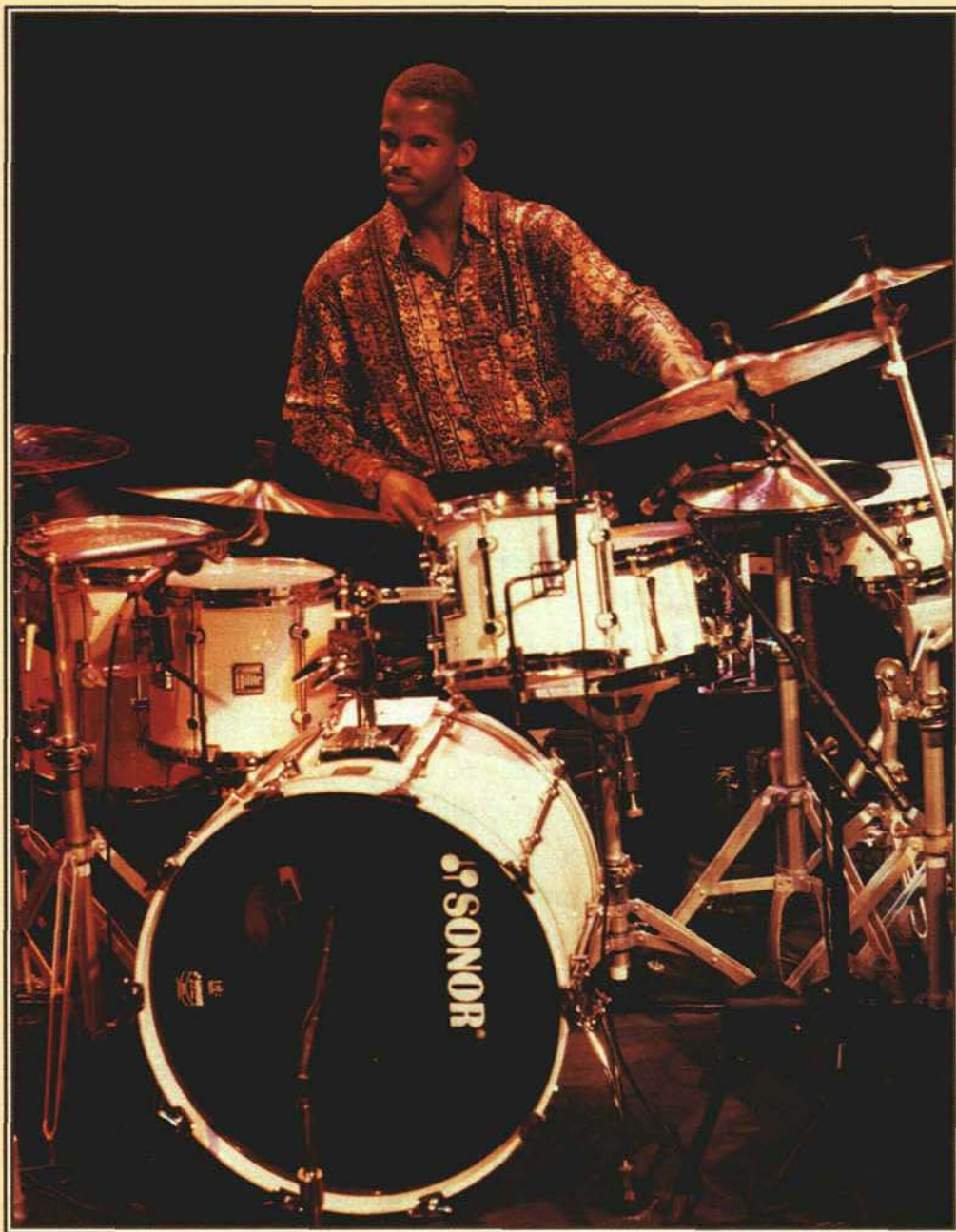
WK: I'll tell you, I was really lucky as a child because my father

had been a drummer before I came along. His record collection was broad—it covered a lot of bases, from jazz to classical. Hearing that stuff being played around the house, without even really concentrating on it, it became a part of me. I can remember on some Saturday mornings wanting to sleep in, but being awakened by Count Basie, Duke Ellington, or Mozart. Looking back now I'm very thankful I was exposed to that at an early age, even before I was thinking about music as a profession.

When I got into high school and started playing in stage band and the orchestra, a lot of the things I had been hearing my whole life sounded familiar when I had the chance to play them. It just made it that much easier for me to understand what the essence of the music was. I think it helped give me the attitude that it's imperative for a drummer to be able to play as many styles as possible. That understanding really adds to your playing overall.

WFM: This must be something you've continued, because I can hear some very contemporary influences in your playing, even though you're still coming up with your own way of doing things.

WK: Most recently some of the Latin things have fascinated me. Believe it or not, I've only



Inspiring And Being Inspired

In order of preference, here are the records that William says best represent his drumming

Album Title	Artist	Label/Catalog#
Greenhouse	The Yellowjackets	GRP GRD-9630
The Spin		MCA 6304
Politics		MCA 6236
Four Corners		MCA 5994
One Heart Wild	Danny Heines	Silver Wave SD-604
Iguana	Ray Obiedo	Windham Hill Jazz WD-0128
Let Them Say	Montreux	Windham Hill Jazz WD-1084
From Me To You	Tom Coster	Head First A 384-2

And here are the records he listens to most for inspiration.

Album Title	Artist	Drummer	Label/Catalog #
Believe It	The New Tony Williams Lifetime	Tony Williams	Columbia PC-33836
The Fo'tet	Ralph Peterson	Ralph Peterson	Blue Note 795475 2
Electric Outlet	John Scofield	Steve Jordan	Gramavision GRCD 8405
Soul Cages	Sting	Manu Katche	A&M 75021 64052
Soro	Salif Keita	not listed	Mango ZCM 9808
Li'l Ol' Groovemaker	Count Basie	Sonny Payne	Verve 821799 2
The Big Beat	Art Blakey, Max Roach, Philly Joe Jones, Elvin Jones		Milestone MCD 47016 2
Heavy Weather	Weather Report	Alex Acuna	Columbia CK 34418

recently been investigating the names of many rhythms. I've listened to a lot of Latin music over the years and picked up on a lot of the grooves. I worked on them until I could play what I heard, and then I got comfortable enough with them that I could apply them. However, I didn't know, at least on a few of these patterns, what they were called! That was turning out to be a little embarrassing when I'd be playing a clinic and someone would ask, "Could you play a montuno?" It helps to know that sort of thing. The Frank Malabe/Bob Weiner book, *Afro-Cuban Rhythms For Drumset*, is an excellent source of information, and I've been pulling things from that.

WFM: What types of playing experiences did you have early on that exposed you to different styles?

WK: In junior and senior high school, the stage bands required some basic understanding of styles. I'd recommend that sort of playing experience for any young drummer. Get into a school band program, because no matter how good or bad it may be, there's bound to be many things that you can pick up on.

While I was still in school I met percussionist Bill Summers, who has recorded with a lot of people, including Quincy Jones. For a time, I worked with his band, Summer's Heat. I met two of my early musical partners in that band. We started a production company where we would write tunes for R&B artists. This is right when drum machines were coming out, and I got into that and started getting into the studios doing a little bit of programming. That's when I started expanding myself beyond my instrument, with the writing and the programming.

I think it's important for young players coming up to be able to do other things in music besides just playing the drums. I

mean, there's a lot to cover being a drummer, but if you want to have a long career in music you must branch out. When you get to be 50 or 60 years old, playing drums is going to be different for you then. In life it's good to diversify.

Anyway, after I worked with Bill Summers, I got the gig with Andy Narell, and that was my first exposure to world touring and being a part of a band that did records and toured. That was really an interesting experience because I was working with a percussionist, Kenneth Nash, who was originally the band's drummer. That created a little bit of tension—having me come in as a young guy and replacing him—but it made me work even harder. The gig really caused me to home in on the groove, and at the same time leave space. The challenge for me was to keep it simple, and yet put a part of me in the music.

Another experience that I had early in my career was with Fantasy Records. I got involved with one particular project at their studio with a guy by the name of Herb Jimerson, who was on staff there. His job was to fix up some of the old Prestige-label releases. That meant going in and redoing many of the rhythm tracks. He was remaking a lot of the old Staple Singers records, the Dramatics, and other groups that played in that older R&B style. It required a drummer to go in and groove, even though the time was wavering all over the place from the original recordings. That was a challenge, and I had to have an understanding of that style. It didn't turn my funk chops around, but it was an experience that really shaped my playing, as far as getting into another style is concerned.

Again, the more styles you're exposed to, the more seasoned your playing will be. Even if you have a funk gig, if you're able to give a different character to a certain song or, like you men-

tioned earlier, even just a fill, it adds to your depth as a drummer. Having an understanding of the feel of Latin, for example, really broadens your ability to play funk.

WFM: I'd like to get away from styles for a moment and talk about technique. You're becoming known as a musical drummer, as well as a player who has a lot of chops. You can play way uptempo swing, you have great hands, good feet, etc. I was wondering if the "pursuit of technique" was something you've always been into.

WK: Actually not at all. I really consider myself a street player. I mean, I can read music, and I was lucky to be able to take lessons to get the basics down, including chart reading, music theory, and technique. But at the core of my playing is my ear. I listen more than anything else.

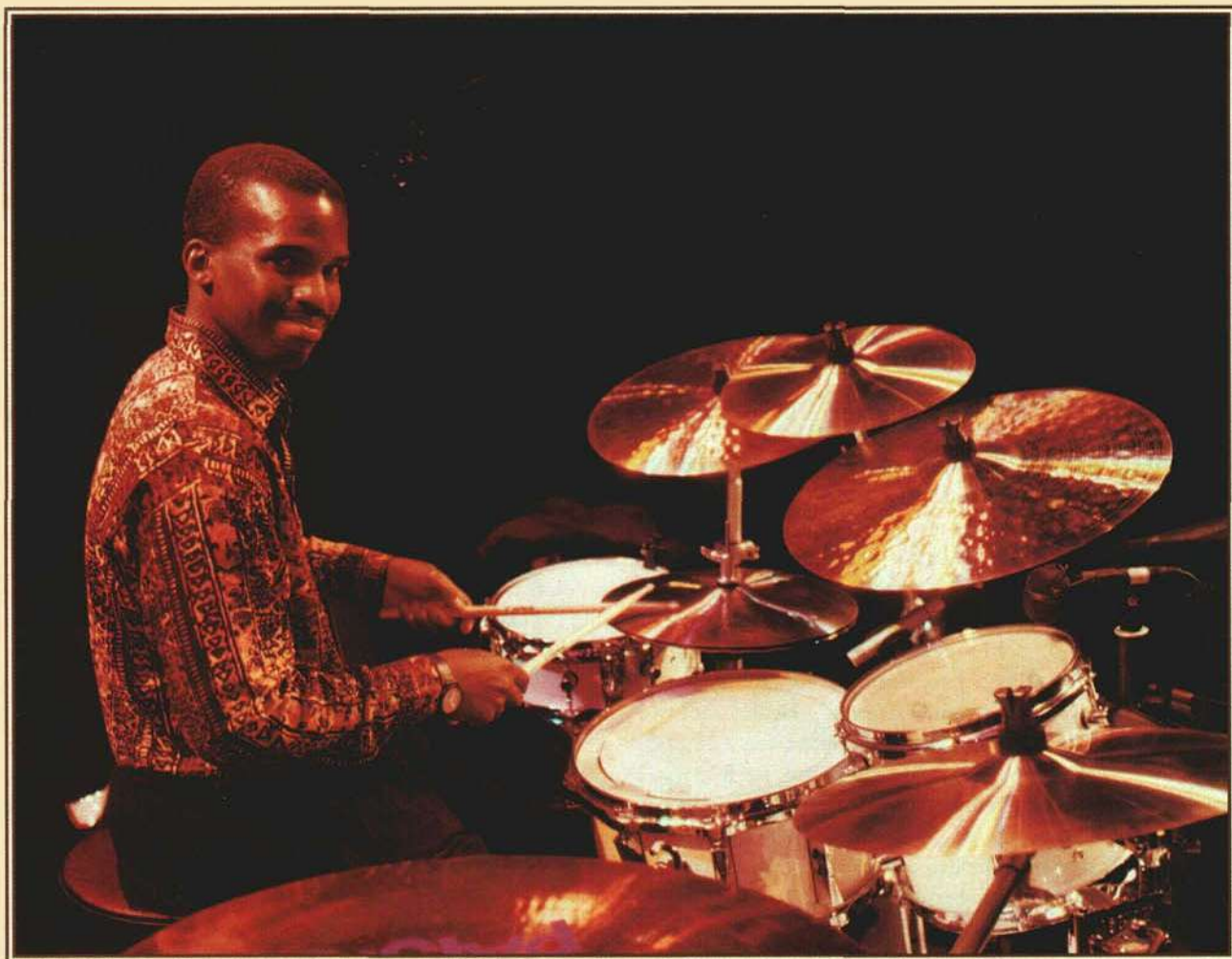
In the past few years with the Yellowjackets I've really concentrated on improving my reading, so in that regard I'm a bit more studied. When I first got

**"To me,
every groove,
every song
has its own
heartbeat, and
as a drummer
it's extremely
important to
home in on what
that is and
somehow get
it across to
the audience."**

with the band, my reading was okay, but I was relying on my ears a bit too much. Not that that's a bad thing—I just needed to get the balance better between the reading and the listening.

As far as straight technique is concerned, I'm a big fan of the single-stroke roll. That's a chop that I guess people are starting to recognize in my playing. My approach to using it is heavily influenced by Tony Williams. To me, Tony, along with Joe Morello, are two of the masters of the single-stroke roll, and of using it tastefully. That's something I've always been fascinated with, and it's something I can always improve.

I do have a certain perspective about my hands. I think I'm dealing with two personalities—my pad personality and my drum personality. I'm dealing with trying to mesh those two personalities. There are certain things that I do on the pad that I use on the kit, but not as much as when I'm just working on the pad, just checking it out. When I'm on the kit on stage in the middle of a



gig, when I look down at my hands, sometimes I'm in a completely different position than I want to be in.

WFM: That doesn't concern you, as far as thinking to yourself, "I'm not doing this right"?

WK: It doesn't freak me out, but I'm sure it does affect me in terms of my endurance. I feel a little more tired by the end of a gig than I'd prefer. I'd like to be able to play three sets and not be so drenching wet from working so hard. That's one of the things I'm hoping to improve on.

Another technical thing that I enjoy working on is polyrhythms. I'm fascinated by them. That has really added to my chops catalog. It's really more trickery than anything else. To me, applying polyrhythms is something that sounds much more complicated than it actually is. Something as simple as implying 5 against 4/4 time, and how you break it up between your limbs, can sound amazingly complex. So I'm always investigating different polyrhythms to apply to my playing.

WFM: When you describe yourself as a "street player," I find that hard to believe. There must have been some other influences early on in your musical training.

WK: Again, I came from a great musical environment. Besides my father, my brother Hershall is a keyboard player. He was a big inspiration to me. I mentioned my father and his jazz, classical, and vintage music collection; I also had my brother back then, who was involved

with what was happening at that time—Motown, Sly & the Family Stone, and a band that he was in for six years, Graham Central Station. *That* was a great school for me to attend, in terms of funk. I was able to be backstage at an early age and check out some great players. The original drummer in that band was Willie Sparks, from the Bay area. He had a certain fire in his playing, and when he played a backbeat with that rimshot of his it was just an accent better than most players. He had a certain character to his playing that a very select few have. If you name the greats—Buddy, Tony, Elvin—they all had this burning fire in them, in terms of accents *and* feel. That's something I really try to capture in my playing. It's hard to describe, but it's just something that sets them apart. So

being exposed to all of that, along with my father's influence, just pointed me in the right direction.

I started drumming like a lot of people, beating on my mother's couch, until they realized they better get me some drums. So I was given a Montgomery Ward aluminum/paper drumset, which I destroyed in a day. I eventually got my first *almost* real kit; I think it was a Crest.

WFM: I've heard of those; I think they make toothpaste as well.

WK: [laughs] That probably explains their sound! I started playing along with James Brown records, and especially Sly & the Family Stone. Sly was a big influence. So combine that with all of my father's influences—Count Basie, Duke Ellington, Stan Kenton, Thad Jones, all of those big bands—and I'd be playing along with those records. That's how I got started.

WFM: Did you study with anyone?

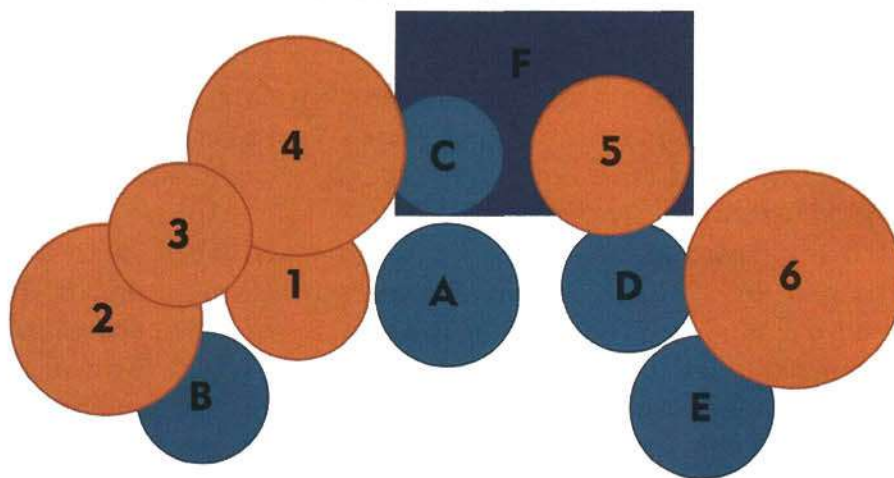
WK: There was one guy who especially got me on the right track, and his name was Bill Nawrocki. I really communicated with him well, and he was really excited about helping me.

WFM: I would assume he saw a lot of potential in you.

WK: Yeah, I think so. After I had studied with him for a while it eventually became time for me to move on—we were showing each other things. I still talk with him today, and we've become friends.

continued on page 74

Will's Kit



Drumset: Sonor *HiLite* series in creme lacquer finish
A. 7 x 14 wood snare
B. 5 x 12 soprano snare
C. 9 x 10 tom
D. 10 x 12 tom
E. 15 x 14 floor tom
F. 17 x 22 bass drum

Cymbals: Paiste
1. 14" *Sound Creation* dark heavy *Sound Edge* hi-hats
2. 18" *Paiste Flatride*
3. 14" *Sound Formula* fast crash
4. 19" *Paiste* dry ride
5. 16" *Sound Formula* full crash
6. 20" 2000 *Sound Reflector* mellow China

Hardware: All Sonor *Protec* series. Bass drum pedal is the *Axis* by Engineered Percussion.

Heads: Remo coated *Pinstripe* on snare, clear *Ambassadors* on tops and bottoms of toms, and a clear *Pinstripe* on bass

Sticks: Sonor 5A model with nylon tip

BOBBY ROCK

From Metamorphosis To Nelson

Bobby Rock has accomplished what so many drummers dream of achieving. He is a working drummer playing in a successful band, and who tours as both a performer and clinician. In his current band, Nelson, he is without question one of the most visible drummers on the scene. He is in high demand as a clinician, and his instructional video, *Metamorphosis*, which combines technical expertise with an entertaining approach, has proven very popular with aspiring rock drummers across the country. Unlike players who reach a level of success where they relax and consider themselves as having "made it," Bobby is constantly practicing, thinking, and talking about drumming.

Currently he is working on a new instructional book that emphasizes hand exercises and practice concepts.

In addition to all of the above, Bobby is a devoted proponent of a health and fitness lifestyle; he takes his personal bodybuilding very seriously. Because of this lifestyle, he has a seemingly inexhaustible level of energy, which shines through in his playing and devotion to the drumming art. everywhere he goes he attracts a following of not only drummers, but music fans who are anxious to talk to one of their heroes. As a veteran of the journeyman musician lifestyle, Bobby is the definitive role model for those who wish to emulate a successful career.

By Michael Lee Briggs Photos By Michael Jachles

MB: What is the most exciting aspect of playing with Nelson?

BR: The touring aspect of this group is what I've been looking forward to since the beginning. I recorded my parts for the record in three days, and since then I had just been waiting. Although Nelson appears to be an overnight sensation, the twins were signed to the label for a solid two years before we started recording. We waited six months after the record came out before we went out on the road, so there was a lot of excitement and momentum already happening when we went, which allowed us to go out in a headlining situation.

The reason it worked out that way was because when the record first came out, no other bands wanted to take us out on tour. They thought after seeing the first video and hearing the songs that there was a "poser" thing happening with the band and that we couldn't play. We finally realized that if we wanted to play, we had to book ourselves into theaters and mid-sized halls.

We've been very fortunate in that we've been able to tour in a headlining capacity with only one record out. We had been playing 1,800 to 3,200-seat places when headlining. Because of how well the record is doing and the videoplay we've been getting, we are now playing 3,000-seaters all the way up to the huge outdoor theaters.

MB: How do people react when Nelson comes on stage with somewhat of a "teen idol" image? What happens when you come out and show the true caliber of the musicians in the group?

BR: People usually get their heads blown off. This is really a smokin' band, and definitely the best rock band I've ever played with. One of the things the twins planned on from day one is that they wanted to put together a monster band, so that the live show would be the next logical progression from the album. We all get our own solo spots and an opportunity to "really play."

MB: What's it like to play in a band that appeals to teenagers, especially the teenage girls, as far as security concerns go?

BR: It's absolutely pandemonium! Every show, every day, virtually everywhere it's crazy. I've seen things like this on CNN with the New Kids on the Block. We knew the record was doing really well, especially when the record company sent the twins out on a promotional tour, doing talk shows and autograph signings, prepping the spots we'd be coming back to play. But I never really understood how crazy it could get until I saw it for myself. I had been keeping in touch with the twins while they were doing that promo tour, while I was out on a *Metalmorphosis* drum clinic tour, and they were amazed at how much excitement was being generated by the fans even then.

One thing that freaked me out the most was when we did an autograph signing at a shopping mall in LA I figured that in LA the kids see this kind of thing all the time, and a few hundred would turn out. But it was just unbelievable; there were 3,000-plus kids lined up throughout the Sherman Oaks mall screaming at ear-piercing levels. The little girls were crying and passing out, and I was just wiggling watching it all.





Then when we first went on tour we carried enough PA. to accommodate 5,000 seat venues, but the kids were screaming so loud that we had to upgrade the P.A. on two separate occasions. If you were by the soundboard they were sometimes screaming so loud that you couldn't even hear the band.

MB: What were you doing when you hooked up with Nelson?

BR: Back in 1987, I was with the Vinnie Vincent Invasion, and we all went to the MTV Music Awards. The Nelsons were sitting right in front of us. We got to talking, and they were really nice guys. I remember thinking that someday, somebody would do very well by working with them. We stayed in touch and ran into each other over the course of the next several years. I went reluctantly with a friend to a local club in L.A. one time and ran into the twins again. It was about six months after my gig with the Invasion was over, and I was wondering what my next move would be. They had just gotten signed, the demos were finished, they were ready to roll, and they were putting together a band, so the timing was perfect. We started hanging out socially and I was listening to their tapes, and about six weeks later we started rehearsals. It wasn't a question of an audition or anything, we just started.

When they got signed to Geffen, they already had some good tunes. But they wanted all the tunes on their album to be as strong as the ones they already had. So they took some time to write in different kinds of environments, both here and in Europe. They weren't going to start recording until the time was right. So they put together ten bona fide singles for the record.

Getting prepared was a really slow process, but the guitarist, Brett, and I began rehearsals with the twins. The fellow who was managing the Nelsons at the time was from Australia and knew Brett and recommended him highly. Then each of the other guys joined one at a time over the summer. It took a while to get the right chemistry together. They

brought Mark Tanner, an independent producer who they had been writing with, to work on putting the band side of things together, even though he was more involved with the production side initially. The twins had known him for quite some time and wanted him involved.

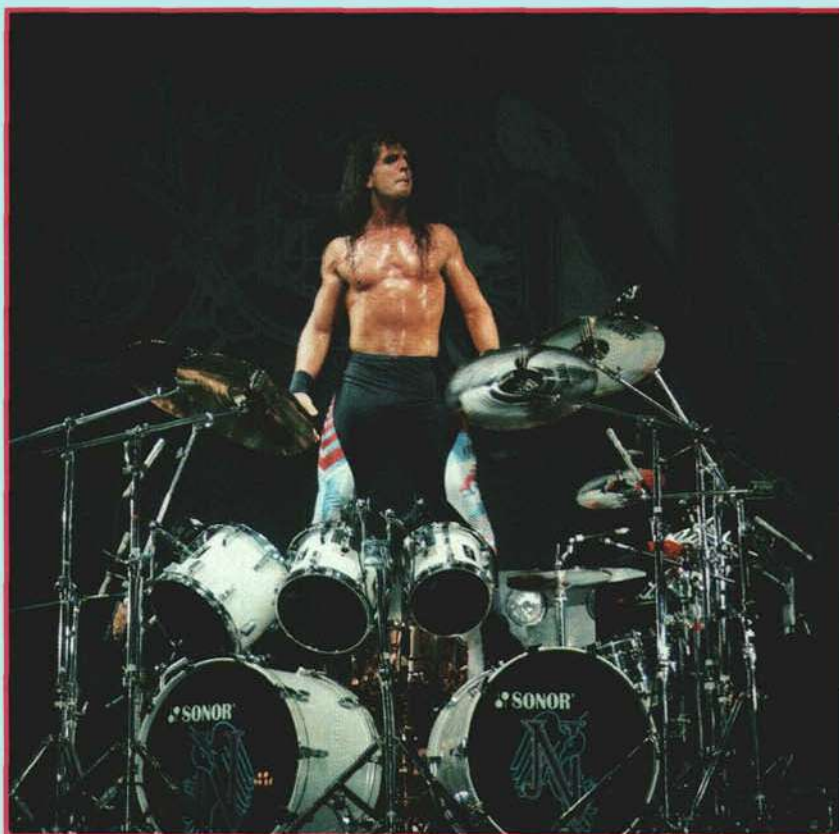
MB: So the twins had a definite idea of how they wanted things to work?

BR: Very definitely! One thing I have to say is that in a situation like this many people would expect it to be "the twins" and a back-up band type of image. A lot of that cannot be avoided, because the twins are just success magnets. But they've always been really good about making this whole situation a band kind of

thing—not only musically but in every other kind of way as well. They had their own vision about what kind of record they wanted, what kind of video they wanted, and how they wanted everything done. They have really stuck to their guns, and I admire them for it.

I remember on the second video, "After The Rain," they knew what they wanted to see, but they went over budget to get it; there was no way around it. So they kicked in their own money to cover the overage, because it's their art and they wanted it right. I really respect that they always persisted no matter what anybody said.

There has been the misconception that the twins always had



it because of who their father was, but they had their share of lean times and have earned everything for themselves.

MB: Do you feel that there is a lot of misconception about the money factor in the music business?

BR: Yes. It's like any business. Say you open your own restaurant and people see that your restaurant has a line of people waiting to get in, and they think, "This guy must be making a fortune." Sure, he may be making a lot of money, but it costs him a lot of money to build the place, pay for the upkeep, and pay the employees. The second thing is that if he wants to continue to make money, he has to advertise, upgrade, and promote it constantly in a circular fashion. It's tough out there; not everybody is a millionaire or will be just because you see them on MTV

MB: What did you do after the record was completed?

BR: We did the photo thing, then a week or two worth of rehearsals, and then an album release club date at the Roxy in LA, which was our first real gig. Then after that the record



came out and we went into rehearsals again. The second group of rehearsals prepared us to go out on tour in September of '90, but the tour got postponed until after the first of the year. So we did a lot of television things during that period.

MB: With those kinds of false starts for the tour, was it hard to put in the rehearsal time after having geared up a couple of times before?

BR: No. We would rehearse when we were getting ready to go out, about six days a week. I have yet to be in a band where I've had six to eight hours of uninterrupted rehearsal, because of band members getting calls from equipment companies or management, and because of so much other activity going on that has to be taken care of. We'd be at the hall for six hours, but the amount of actual rehearsal would vary. Everybody always showed up well-prepared, so it wasn't like it took a lot of work things out, because everyone was able to play so well together.

MB: Have you been able to do any clinics with all of this Nelson activity going on?

BR: I have been doing clinics here and there. I would love to do more, but sometimes it's just a schedule or logistics problem.

MB: With all of your traveling, how does it affect your working out, eating habits, and general lifestyle?

BR: We usually travel at night after the shows, so the next morning, wherever we arrive, we try to find a gym and head over for a workout. Sometimes there are some great facilities in the hotel, but the tour manager calls ahead and makes arrangements for us.

I'm completely vegetarian, but I carry my own cooking utensils and have certain foods requested in the rider of our contract to be at the gig every night. So I stock up on food like organic beans, rice, and whole grain pasta, and I can eat so much of this type of food that I get plenty of protein. To an extent I have monopolized the rider in the

contract; the guys are real cool and are conscientious about what they eat, but they still like to go out if we stop at a truck stop and enjoy the slop that is there. Nobody in the band is involved with drugs or drinking, so they're real cool about my convictions.

MB: How did you get involved with this lifestyle?

BR: I have become a lot more sensitive to the animal situation since I've stopped eating meat, but that wasn't the initial motivation. It started out as a health- and diet-oriented thing. In addition to meat, I cut out all refined sugars and caffeine, like the morning coffee and other things. We all grew up eating sugary cereals in

the morning, fast food at lunch, and pizza at night, so I finally started questioning what I was doing to my body. I started to experiment with organic foods to see if it made any difference, and I was amazed at the results. I can't imagine ever going back.

I think it allows me to be much more productive. I went through a "withdrawal" from all the things I was giving up, like meat, sugar things, and the like. The main thing I notice is that I don't need as much sleep as I thought I used to. You get so much more out of life when you add three hours to your day, time that you would have usually spent sleeping. Even if you only stay awake an extra two hours a day, you have an extra 14 hours at the end of the week, which is like two work days. I can use that time to practice, work on my new books, and all kinds of things. I feel great all the time, and when you feel fit, you can give 110% in every performance.

There are different TV crews that come out on

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"If we are going to propel drumming forward, we have to go out and push the envelope, so to speak, and become adventurous."

Akira Tana

The pages of jazz history aren't exactly filled with examples of groups led by bass/drum duos. Despite the rhythm section's unshakeable influence over the tone, direction, style, and feel of the music, jazz tradition rarely sees drummers and bassists taking command of the wheel. Drummer Akira Tana and bassist Rufus Reid are out to buck that system.

Combining their own deep experience and compositional skills with the talents of emerging sax star Ralph Moore, pianist Rob Schneiderman, and young alto saxist Jesse Davis, TanaReid proves that a creative and confident rhythm section can indeed lead a valid and highly musical jazz ensemble. *Yours And Mine*, the group's debut album on Concord Records, features players seemingly so comfortable with one another, you'd swear they've spent the past several years doing nothing but joyfully jamming together.

Separately and in various combinations, the individuals in TanaReid have appeared on over two hundred albums. Akira Tana in particular has been brightening up the jazz scene in many different settings for quite some time. Sonny Rollins, Zoot Sims, Al Cohn, Lena Home, Art Farmer, Phil Woods, Jim Hall,

Dizzy Gillespie, Bobby Hutcherson, Kenny Barron, and Marian McPartland are but a few of the top jazz artists with whom Akira has performed and/or recorded.

Tana's interests and abilities go further than just jazz, though. On the one hand, a big part of his training has been in the classical world; on the other, stacked in his apartment you'll find racks of electronic keyboards, mixers, and processing units, which Akira has been using with a MIDI-based fusion pop project. These days he's also busy composing a score for a Fuji TV news documentary, in addition to playing the role of disc jockey on the "Jazz Morning From New York" program, which is broadcast weekly on FM Yokohama in Japan. Still more of Akira's busy schedule is taken up by his drum clinics and his adjunct professor duties at Queens and William Paterson colleges.

Akira's drumming drive combines the feel and pulse of tradition with an underlying freedom; he respectfully uses his license to stretch within tasteful boundaries. Even when he's forceful in dictating the shape of a tune, the swing remains supportive. His approach to the kit stays true to his philosophy that "Playing drums is about letting your own expression

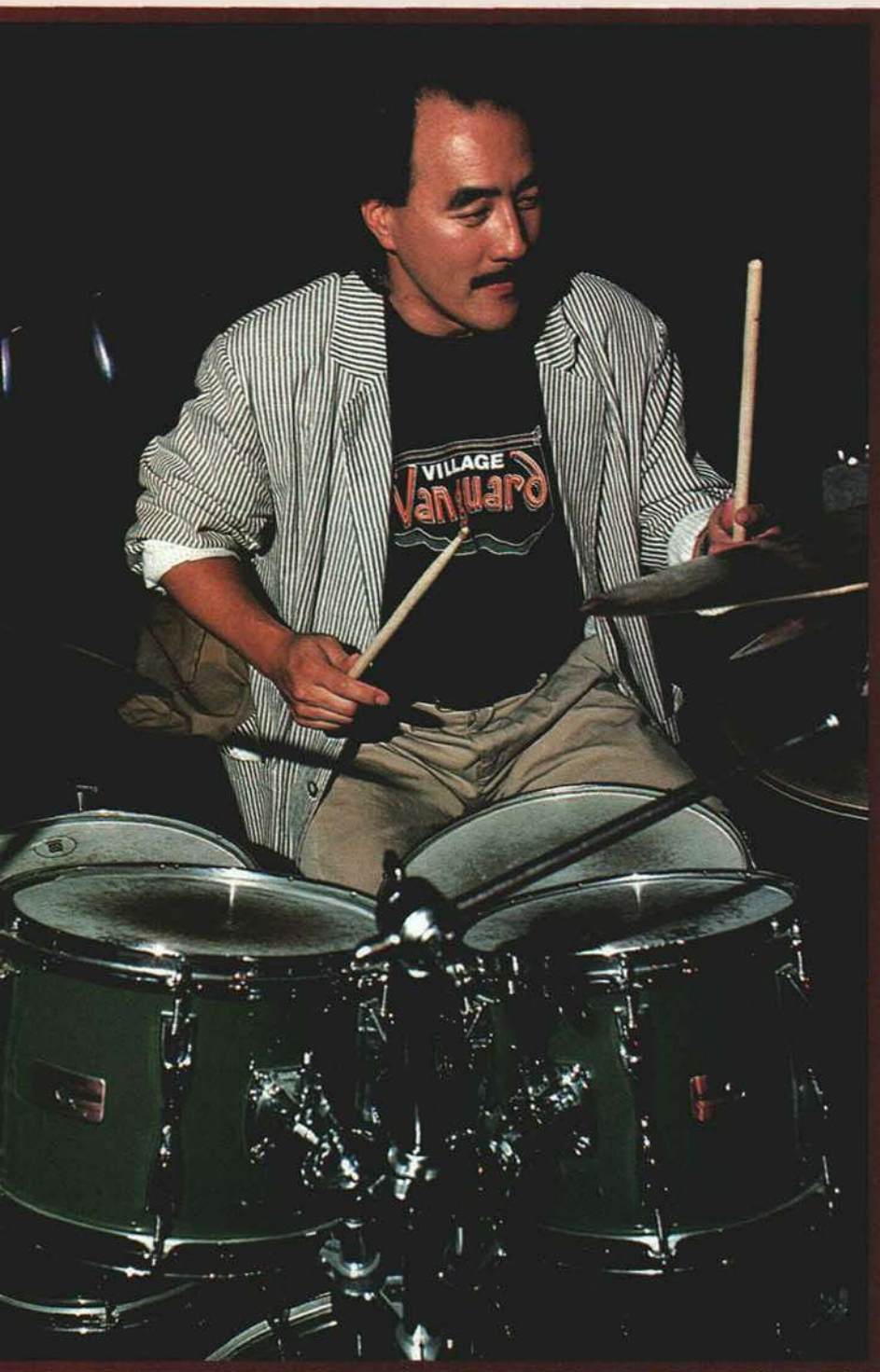
from Sideman to Leader

come through, but ultimately subordinating your ego to the music."

By Jeff Potter

Photos By Ebet Roberts

(Thanks to the Village Vanguard for shoot location)



"The point we're trying to make is that it shouldn't really matter who the sax players are or who else is in the band, because we're basically trying to make a statement with bass and drums."

JP: TanaReid is more than just a convenient name. *Yours And Mine* shows that you two really are a team with a musical personality.

AT: There aren't that many bands that are co-led by a rhythm section, because the emphasis is usually on horns or piano. Rufus and I have enjoyed playing with each other, so we decided to see what we could develop. The group came out of a concert Rufus had for the Hartford Jazz Society. We knew we didn't want a standard quintet format with trumpet, sax, and rhythm section. The idea of two saxes always interested me. I always liked the recording of Miles' group without him, *Cannonball And Coltrane*, with Jimmy Cobb, Wynton Kelly, and Paul Chambers.

JP: Is it possible to tour with the group, considering the commitments of some of the players? Ralph Moore has a career of his own, for instance.

AT: It depends on our schedules. We've already played a couple of festivals during which time Ralph wasn't available and Rob Schneiderman was in Europe with Eddie Harris. So we used Mulgrew Miller on piano and a very good Japanese-American saxophone player from the West Coast, Bob Kenmotsu. It's interesting: When we told the promoter Ralph couldn't make it, he got worried. He had liked the sax players when he saw them in a TV concert. But the point we're trying to make is that it shouldn't really matter who the sax players are or who else is in the band, because we're basically trying to make a statement with bass and drums. Our intent on the recording was to do some originals and some jazz standards written by composers who we have all worked with and respect a lot. It's our tribute to those people we have worked with in the past. It's from our cumulative experience as sidepersons.

JP: It must be quite an ego boost as a drummer to team up with Rufus Reid. He's considered one of the all-time great walking-time players on upright.

AT: Yeah! When we first started talking about it, *he* had actually approached *me*. As far as being known, he has been out here longer than I have and is much more established. I was very flattered that he would even consider co-leading. When I came to New York and ended up on certain gigs and recordings with him, I thought, "Wow! This is really great." Then all of a sudden, to find myself co-leading with him....

It worked out pretty well, because we do communicate about things—about music *and* the music business. Co-leading demands an extra dimension of cooperation and communication. I have

to give Rufus a lot of credit, because he has been trying to do something like this in different settings for a while. Keeping it going is really about chemistry—just as it is in playing music.

Rufus was telling me that he talked to John Lewis [pianist of the Modern Jazz Quartet] about how MJQ has survived for so long. They relegate specific business or music responsibilities to each member of the band. Our business responsibilities are shared, and musically, it's also about 50/50.

JP: As a leader, you must be learning even more about hard business facts than ever before.

AT: In the jazz world, the music is the most important thing, but the business part can be quite bizarre. For instance, I've heard strange stories recently about Japanese promoters. Being an Asian-American in the jazz world, I'm a minority, so these stories were of special interest to me. A Japanese bassist friend of mine had been living in New York and working with Roy Haynes' group for four years. The group got an offer to tour Japan, but the Japanese promoters didn't want this bass player to come because they wanted an all-American band! So he lost out. Another bass player, Chin Suzuki, was playing with Art Blakey, and the

His And Theirs

For those who would like to track down some of the recordings Akira feels best represent his drumming, check these out.

Album Title	Artist	Label/Catalog#
Yours And Mine	Tana Reid	Concord CCD-4440
Sweet And Lovely	James Moody	RCA/Novus 3063-2-N
You Make Me Smile	Art Farmer Quintet	Soul Note SN1076CD
Peer Pleasure	Jimmy Heath	Landmark LCD-1514-2
Warm Valley	Art Farmer	Concord CJ-212
Taking Time	Sumi Tonooka	Candid CD 79502
The Innocent Years	Zoot Sims	Pablo 2310-872
Very Early	John Basile	Sea Breeze SB 2024

Here are the jazz records Akira checks out for inspiration...

Album Title	Artist	Drummer	Label/Catalog#
Now He Sings, Now He Sobs	Chick Corea	Roy Haynes	Blue Note CDP 7900 552
Cannonball & Coltrane	John Coltrane and Cannonball Adderley	Jimmy Cobb	Emarcy 834-5582
Empyrian Isles	Herbie Hancock	Tony Williams	Blue Note BST-84175
Thermo	Art Blakey	Art Blakey	Milestone 47008
Ugetsu	Art Blakey	Art Blakey	Fantasy/OJC 090
'Round About Midnight	Miles Davis	Philly Joe Jones	Columbia CS 8649
Transition	John Coltrane	Elvin Jones	Impulse AS-9195
Hawk In Germany	Coleman Hawkins and Bud Powell	Kenny Clarke	Black Lion BL-159
Miles Ahead	Miles Davis	Art Taylor	Columbia CS 8633

...and here are some of Akira's musical inspirations that he says "defy jazz categorization."

Album Title	Artist	Label/Catalog#
Elis, Essa Mulher	Elis Regina, with Paulinho Braga, etc.	Warner Bros. BR36113
The Rite Of Spring	Stravinsky—Chicago Symphony Orch.	London CS 6885
The Complete Piano Sessions Of Alexander Scriabin	Ruth Caredo	Nonesuch 73035
Epifanie And Folk Songs	Luciano Berio—BBC Symphony Orch.	RCA LSC 3189
	Lembrancas Clare Fischer, with Tris Imboden Concord / and Luis Conte	Picante CCD4404
The Late String Quartets	Beethoven—	Phillips 416-638-2
	"Grosse Fuge" Quartetto Italiano	
Amoroso	Joao Gilberto, with Grady Tate and Joe Corroero	Warner Bros. BS 3053
Miltons	Milton Nascimento, with Robertinho Silva	Columbia CK-45239

same thing happened. But Blakey said, "This guy is in my band. If he doesn't come with me, I'm not coming!" It also happened to an alto player in Lionel Hampton's band. You would think the Japanese would be proud to see a Japanese musician returning home with an American group.

JP: You've played with some of the greatest and appear on a long list of albums, yet due to the nature of the jazz world, your name has not yet received the national attention from drummers and listeners that it deserves.

AT: There are a lot of guys like that in New York.

JP: Some people would think that working with Rollins would be a guaranteed ticket to national attention.

AT: True, but it isn't. There are also well-known musicians who don't have the credentials of lesser-known musicians. It might be due to personality or being in the right place at the right time. Sometimes things just come later for some people than for others. Although Rufus is well-known, even *he* only has a couple of albums as a leader that feature his own music. I was approached to do my own date by Candid Records at the same time Rufus approached me, but I chose to pass that up because of this project.

JP: Speaking of recognition, you and many of your peers who have been playing straight-ahead jazz are of an age group that arrived on the jazz scene just before all the media hype about the "new wave" of young traditionalists. As a result, all that attention bypassed your peer group.

AT: There was an article in the [New Jersey] *Bergen Record* about this "wave" of young lions—guys like Marion Jordan, the Harper Brothers, and Roy Hargrove—that I thought was interesting. It was different than the usual press perspective. The writer's point was that these kids are great, but the media and record companies are using them. What's going to happen to them? How are they going to sustain this intensity of popularity and continue to develop after reaching the pinnacle of having their own record dates and big press coverage?

Carl Jefferson, the president of Con-

cord Records, was discussing this with me. He mentioned the cover story in *Time* that concerned Wynton and the young lions. Wynton, of course, is a little older, but he sparked off this interest in the young guys. Carl's point was, "What about all the record companies that have been steadily recording jazz all this time that weren't even *mentioned*?" Concord, Fantasy, people like Orrin Keepnews weren't even mentioned, whereas Warner Bros., RCA, Columbia, and other big companies were somehow tied into the whole scheme of things.

Musicians could easily get bitter about this. Some musicians feel that way—especially older jazz musicians

who have been out here a long time. But it's not only older guys. I also see musicians closer to my age, in their mid- to late-30's, who see all the young kids coming along and getting quick attention. With all due respect to the young players' talents, you can understand why people get bitter. And bitterness definitely doesn't help in this business.

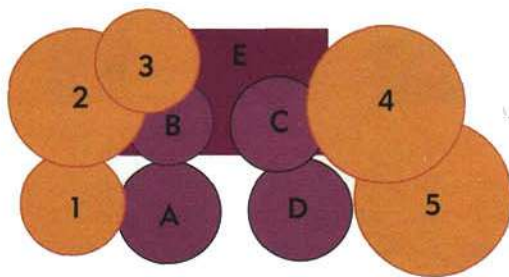
JP: You put in a lot of miles before you struck out as a leader.

AT: Referring to the young lions, Kenny Barron said to me, "I couldn't imagine being 18 and leading my own record date." There's a certain apprenticeship that musicians should have. From those experiences, a musician learns about the

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Akira's Gear



Drumset: Yamaha in jade green finish

- A. 6 1/2 x 14 bronze snare (Ludwig)
- B. 8 x 10 tom
- C. 8 x 12 tom
- D. 14 x 14 floor tom
- E. 14 x 18 bass drum

Heads: Remo coated *Ambassadors* for all batter heads, with clear *Ambassadors* on bottoms of toms

Cymbals: Sabian

- 1. 13" HH hi-hats
- 2. 19" HH crash-ride
- 3. 14" HH thin crash
- 4. 20" HH medium ride
- 5. 20" HH China

Hardware: All Yamaha

Sticks: Vic Firth *SD4* or *8DJazz* models with wood tip



Tama puts a great deal of emphasis on innovative engineering—a philosophy illustrated by their 1991 NAMM Show display.

INSIDE TAMA

The classic American drum company history starts with an individual drummer who saw a need for some product improvement, got into a backyard manufacturing operation, and eventually parlayed that into a major drum line. Essentially, these were companies started by drummers who ultimately became businessmen.

The history of the Tama drum brand follows an almost exactly opposite path. In 1908, the Hoshino family, of Nagoya, Japan, operated a well-established bookstore chain in which they also sold sheet music. This led to small-scale wholesal-

ing of musical instruments in Japan and some importing (including Ludwig and Slingerland drums). The company's "Star" brand was established then—"Hoshi" means "star" in Japanese—but the drums were made by others. World War II interrupted the business, and a new start had to be made after the war.

At that time, the company remained primarily engaged with distribution and import. But it became clear by the late 1950s that a world market existed for musical instruments. In 1955 Hoshino started exporting their Star drums, first to Hong Kong and ultimately into the U.S. Soon after, it was determined that

greater benefits could be achieved from manufacturing than from distributing, so the first Tama factory was opened in Nagoya in 1962.

According to Tama's General Manager, Mike Shimada, "That factory started as a guitar manufacturer, hoping to take advantage of the first boom for electric guitars around the world. But that boom suddenly disappeared, and a lot of companies had difficult times. So instead, the company tried to make drums for other people. Most Japanese factories in the musical instrument business started that way, rather than trying to make and sell their own lines.

By Rick Van Horn

"Japan's main buyers at that time were the U.S. and the UK, where the 'garage band' boom was especially big, and the demand for low-cost instruments was high. Wholesalers in those countries would come to Japan to have instruments made cheaply and quickly in order to meet the demand, then put their own labels on them. At this time, the Hoshino company's participation was not really 'music-oriented,' but rather was 'business-oriented.'"

Through that experience, the company learned to develop their own products. Then in the early '70s, the dollar had a drop in value, and Japanese products got more expensive in the U.S. "Incoming orders went down drastically," Shimada explains, "and all that our customers seemed concerned with was the lowest possible price. In 1973 the dollar went up again, but another crisis hit us: oil prices. That almost killed our business, because once again products imported into the U.S. from Japan became more expensive. And at that point we had no brand identity to trade on. We were dealing with over 100 distributors in the U.S., and no one was interested in a better instrument; they just wanted cheap merchandise to sell."

"Our president, Mr. Yoshihiro Hoshino, loves things that are unique, with an appeal all their own. He believes that that's the way a company can grow. He became very tired of dealing with so many jobber-type wholesalers. So he made a big decision: We would do it by ourselves."

"The first thing he did was to put our company into the U.S.," Mike continues. "One of our distributors, Harry Rosenberg, of Medley Music, in Philadelphia, was also a consultant for Martin. He was always asking us, 'Why don't you make a better product? If you do, people will be willing to pay more.' That comment impressed Mr. Hoshino a lot. So in 1971 they entered into a joint venture. That's why Hoshino USA is in Bensalem, Pennsylvania, near Philadelphia. At that time, Medley Music had their own brand, called Elger, so our company name at that time was Elger. In 1980 Mr. Rosenberg wanted to retire, so we took it over

ourselves and changed the name to Hoshino USA.

"Up to 1974, we sold our drums under the name of Star. But as I explained, all those difficulties hit us seriously. So our current vice-president, Joe Hoshino, took over the factory and tried to restart our operation almost from zero. The new company was given the name of 'Tama,' which was the name of Mr. Yoshihiro Hoshino's grandmother. In 1981, the



(From left): Mike Shimada (Tama General Manager), Yoshihiro Hoshino (President, Hoshino Gakki Co. Ltd.), and Nero Andoh (Chief of Hoshino's Advertising Division).



R&D Director Naohiro Yasuda (at right) discusses ideas with a member of his staff.

company was incorporated as Hoshino Gakki Co., Ltd., and has since grown to include operations in Los Angeles, London, Amsterdam, Tokyo, and Taiwan."

According to Shimada, Joe Hoshino's aim in 1974 was to make products that could create an identity for the company's brand name. "He started first with hardware," Mike says, "because that's the easiest area in which to make innovations. Drums are drums; you can't change the shape. Marketing research led us to develop the *Titan* hardware line, which included double-braced legs and the first mass-produced boom stand on the drum market. From then on it was

a procession of small innovations and improvements. For example, our *Cymbal Mate* was the first combination protective holder and wing nut for cymbals. Even though these were relatively minor parts, they were enough to establish the impression that they were uniquely Tama-made."

"The first catalog under the Tama brand featured the *Royalstar* line. Some parts made at that time were our own design, but it was more or less a transitional period for us. The next year we introduced the *Imperialstar* line, which was really the start of Tama's own complete identity."

In December of 1977, Tama introduced the *Superstar* drumkit. Up until then, the company had never produced a lacquered shell; all their shells had been covered. According to Shimada, "Only Ludwig and Gretsch were offering lacquered shells at that time, and they were fairly expensive. I think the success of *Superstar* was greatly due to the fact that we automated the manufacturing process a great deal in an effort to keep the costs down. It certainly hit the market with a lot of impact."

"We added deep shells to the *Superstar* line in 1982, and in 1983 we introduced the *Artstar* series—at the same time Neil Peart came aboard as an endorser. Around that time our 'Golden Age' was established."

"We had our entry-level *Swingstar* series from the beginning," Mike continues, "but in the U.S.

the *Imperialstar* line was so successful that we could sell more of it than the *Swingstar*, so our concentration was on *Imperialstar*. But we constantly improved on the *Swingstar* line. Somewhere around 1983 we decided to use the ball tom-mount system on *Swingstar*, and in 1984 we changed the lug. From that time on the quality of *Swingstar* was so close to *Imperialstar* that the difference was minimal, and we eventually decided to discontinue *Imperialstar*."

In 1985 Tama had a serious problem because of the increased value of the Japanese yen against the dollar. "We tried to find ways of overcoming these eco-

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INSIDE TAMA

Drum Fabrication

By 1988 Tama's operations had outgrown the factory that had been established in 1962, so a new factory was built in Seto City—an industrial area outside of Nagoya. The plant is primarily involved with the creation and finishing of drum shells and with final assembly. A combination of automation and assembly-line processing allows the factory to make around 12,000 pieces per month in about 23 working days.



Shells are created from ply panels placed into pressure molds.

molding process is one of the most important steps in drum production. If we cannot make a perfectly round shell in this process, when the shell goes to the sanding machine in the next process, the machine sometimes takes more off one side than another. Eighty percent of our drum production is done by machine, and consistency is the most important factor for mass-production."

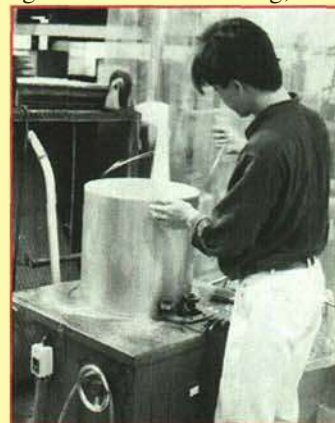
The shells are made about 1" deeper than actual size, then trimmed to exact

adjustments are pre-programmed and automatically controlled. So, for example, the amount of pressure from a sanding cylinder placed on the inside of a shell is not hand-controlled by the operator—as is often the case with belt sanders or sanding wheels. The machine advances slowly into the shell and back out again, automatically guided by a track and taking off a pre-determined amount of material.

Following the internal sanding, the



Some sanding jobs are still done on this machine, but most are handled on computerized Sanders.



Covered shells are specially trimmed to allow clearance for drumheads.

Drum production starts with the creation of the shells from individual ply panels. These panels come from the lumber mill as pre-cut rectangles, but Tama cuts angled edges on each in order to have them fit into the mold perfectly. Inner and outer plies are cut to minutely different lengths.

The individual plies of wood are placed into large, metallic, barrel-shaped molds, then bent into shape, layered with glue, and hammered down until they line up properly. Center inserts hold them in place and exert pressure outward against the sides of the molds—which are heated to aid in the curing process. There is a different mold for each size shell, and each must be machined to a very fine tolerance.

According to Mr. Michio Nakamoto, Tama's factory manager, "The shell-

size by a double-bladed saw that cuts both edges simultaneously. A rotating baffle holds the shell from the inside. Laser beams mark the exact edge points on the shell, showing the operator where to place the shell in order to match up properly with the sawblades. (This machine is one of several in Tama's production line created from original designs. Understandably concerned with protecting their investment, the company requested that I not take photographs of those machines.)

Another machine puts the shell on a tripod of rollers, then applies a sanding cylinder to the inside. The depth and amount of sanding is pre-set on the machine, which is adjustable to accept any size drum from 6" to 24". Although all of the machines are supervised and manually turned on and off, all of their

shell is placed on a machine that cuts the bearing edge, holding the drum in a vertical configuration and rotating it past a 45° cutter. Then a second sanding machine rotates the shell past a sanding belt held on a 45° angle to sand the bearing edge. A third sanding machine rotates the shell while a belt sander is applied against its outside surface. This belt is hydraulically lifted in increments in such a way as to completely sand the outer surface in an evenly controlled and pre-programmed manner.

Bearing edges are not cut on pro-line shells that are to be painted. Since lacquer can build up during the spraying process and change the angle of the bearing edge, pro-line drums receive their bearing edges after painting has been completed. *Rockstar* drums, whether painted or covered, have their

bearing edges cut at one time on the machine described above.

For drum finishing, Tama uses both hand- and computer-operated painting booths. The latter incorporates an automated painting arm that is computer-controlled so as to get specifically detailed amounts of paint at all levels of the drum. It's used for the pro-line drums; *Rockstar Pro* drums are sprayed by hand. Pro-line drums receive two undercoatings, two paint coatings, and two clear lacquer final coatings, with sanding in between each. A microwave oven is used to dry the painted shells. Since the *Rockstar Pro* series is only coated twice, the surface painting is most important—so a special surface painting is applied in a different department.



Rockstar Pro lacquered shells are sprayed by hand; Artstar II and Granstar Custom drums are sprayed in a computer-controlled process.

The same type of mechanical belt sanders used to sand the outside of the raw shells are used for the outside of the sprayed shells. A hydraulic lifter moves the sanding belt past the rotating shell. After being sprayed and sanded, the drums are mechanically buffed, using a wax compound. Final buffing and waxing is done on a different machine that buffs from two sides simultaneously, then turns the drum 90° and buffs in the opposite direction. This avoids "grain" in the waxing and adds a final luster. (After the pro-line drums are painted and buffed, they receive their bearing edges. Then the edges are sanded, waxed, and buffed—which, surprisingly, is done by hand!)

On shells that are to be covered, strips of pre-cut, pre-glued covering material

are applied to the shells, which are then put in between two pressure-rollers that press the material into place. The edges of the covering material are trimmed on a table router set to specific tolerances in order to allow clearance for drumheads.

After a shell has been covered or painted, computer-controlled drilling machines are used to drill lug, vent, and mounting-bracket holes. The machine used to drill the bass drum employs four completely separate and independent sets of drill bits of different dimensions and configurations. The computer controls when and where the drum rotates, and which of the four drill sets is operating at a time. As a result, this one machine drills every hole necessary for the shell—each exactly to specifica-



Final assembly involves the most hand labor of any construction step.

tions—in approximately 30 to 45 seconds.

Logo badges are applied by a pressure-stamp machine; the grommet goes in and is automatically flanged by a raised metal template on the underside of the machine. There is no hammering; it's a very smooth, quiet pressure process that results in a very neatly flanged grommet. There is even a machine involved in bending the logo badges (which come from the factory as flat pieces of sheet metal) into a curve to conform better to the drumshells.

Final assembly is the only major operation still done by hand—simply because Tama has not yet found any way to automate this step. A group of workers uses hand and power tools to assemble the various hardware parts onto the drums,

then pack them into plastic bags and boxes for shipping. Drums for overseas markets are shipped directly from the port of Nagoya. The U.S. is about 50% of Tama's market, followed by domestic Japan, Germany, France, the U.K., and other European markets.

Although Tama's concern with automation may sound callous, it isn't due to a poor regard for their employees. (This is borne out by the fact that much of the work force has been with the company for 15 years or more.) Instead, it's due primarily to economic necessity, as Mr. Nakamoto explains.

"We are concerned with how to make drums with fewer people, because the cost of labor has been getting higher and higher all the time. The cost for our machines is also very high, but several of those machines can do many things, thereby eliminating the need for extra people. For example, only one man operates the six-machine department that cuts, sands, and puts the bearing edges on all of the shells. This helps to keep the company competitive with others who manufacture where labor is less expensive. Our R&D department designed all the machines to fit our needs; they don't exist anywhere else in the world—which is why we are very guarded about them."

The manufacture of hardware parts is a lengthy and involved process. From the initial design concept, final drawings and plans must be made and given to the people who will create the parts. Some are machined, but many are die-cast. Tama's die-casting is mainly done by the Enakin-zoku Manufactory, a company located in the city of Nakatsugawa, an hour and a half south of Nagoya. This company also handles the plating of most metal parts, and does some pedal assembly operations. The two companies have been associated for over 28 years. Mike Shimada explains the reason for this sub-contracting arrangement: "If we were to do everything ourselves, we would have to bring in people who have all the necessary skills, and invest in a tremendous amount of machinery. But there are a lot of different companies in Japan that specialize in certain areas of manufacturing. So it's much easier and more efficient to take advantage of their expertise."



AN OPEN LETTER

... On Cymbals

The cymbal. The world's most imperspicuous musical instrument. It's a round piece of bronze alloy, shaped into a form by various techniques¹ intended to organize the alloy's inherent sound properties to produce a sound picture that meaningfully aids the drummer's and percussionist's musical expression needs.

Enter marketing. You can make the most beautiful instrument in the world, but if you don't tell people about it effectively, you are forever doomed to oblivion, and nobody buys your instrument. The question at issue is the cymbal's apparent simplicity. There are no dials, no knobs, no specifications, no mechanical parts to report



ambiguity and tell you all sorts of things all day long, or do we painfully try to impart what we really know to be the truth? The truth however, is usually a lot harder to tell accurately, and the temptation is great to simplify matters to fit them into 70 words, to distort them where they don't quite fit your product, and twist them where it fits your marketing plan. And besides, why not dress things up a little to make them more interesting?

... On Consistency

Let's say you really like John Bonham's sound with Led Zeppelin. Or Stewart Copeland's sound with the Police. Or Will Kennedy's sound with the Yellowjackets. Or Terry Bozzio's sound with

Jeff Beck. Then, somehow you find out what particular models they play. Great, you say, I'll go out and get those, 'cause I'd like those sounds in my set. Easy, isn't it? Or is it? Try it

Isn't that a bit thick, guys? (Besides, how could they believe it themselves, they must have heard about Paiste's consistency.)

For the record: we test every cymbal that leaves the factory against *one*, and only *one* master cymbal, *five* times during manufacturing, the last one being the sound check by an experienced drummer.

... On 'Cast' vs. 'Non-Cast' Cymbals

Where did these curious terms 'cast' and 'non-cast' cymbals come from? Careful examination of applicable literature will reveal this mystery for you easily.² Let's see: Webster's quotes the following definition for 'cast': "...to give a particular shape to a substance by pouring in liquid...form into a mold and letting or causing to harden without pressure...". Okay. This obviously refers to mixing copper and tin, heating it up 'till it melts, and

RADICALLY DIFFERENT

on. It's just simply a round piece of bronze that you strike to make it sound. It is almost impossible to make claims about cymbals which can be verified easily by the relevant audience: *the users of cymbals*. Except for their sound. Yet, sound is so personal a matter and our language completely inadequate to describe sound.

And there is the problem. All of us companies can say: "Buy ours..." "...it's made this way versus that way..." "...we have secret ingredients..." "...these drummers play it and they can't be wrong..." or whatever, and you wouldn't really know anything anyhow. Nobody except a handful of people on this planet definitely know how hammering, lathing, shaping, heating, the distribution of stress, the molecular interaction of the alloy's components and so on affect the final outcome in terms of the cymbal's sound. (Oh, don't get us wrong. In praxis, *all* of you know a great cymbal when you hear it.) Precisely this ambiguity allows plentiful treatment of cymbals in marketing. And that's where ethics come in. Do we take advantage of this

once. It won't work most of the time (the reason it *may not* work even with ours is studio engineering - you can make things sound plenty of different ways in there). Yet, companies go ahead and print artists' set-ups, creating the impression that you *can* buy cymbals that *sound the same*.³ We can't tell you how the other cymbal makers do it,⁴ but you *can* take twenty 16" Paiste Line Full Crashes, for example, line them up, and you will find only the minutest variances.⁴ Moreover: you *can* buy Stewart Copeland's sound in the store (he recorded pretty clean, true to his set's sound, and so did the other drummers mentioned⁵). In our code of ethics, if a great artist plays a particular cymbal sound, you should be able to go to a store and get that same sound, period. That's the way it should be. So how come one North American cymbal maker states in an internal marketing paper about our cymbals: "...their endorsers have to go to the factory and pick over thousands of cymbals to find what they want..."

then pouring it into a mold to obtain a piece of bronze alloy in the final shape of a cymbal. No problem so far, right? Wait a minute. Then how would you make a 'non-cast' cymbal? Perhaps, by *not* mixing metals, *not* heating them, and *not* pouring them into a mold? Actually, as you will see, both terms are used improperly and cause confusion instead of clarification.

Carefully re-examine the definition given above. It says: 'particular shape'. That's the crucial part. The phrase 'particular shape' as we understand it, should refer to the final shape of the cymbal, in other words, it is not hammered or otherwise brought into that final shape. But there's a problem: a cymbal, cast entirely into its final shape would be porous and brittle, and completely unsuited from a durability and sound point of view. That's why we all cast the alloy and then roll it under pressure into flat disks or first sheets and then cut out disks and proceed with *other techniques* to shape the cymbal. In our particular manufacturing philosophy,



¹ We principally hammer and lathe our bronze cymbals.

² Besides, the same cymbal sounds different from one drummer to another.

³ To find out for yourself, we recommend that you go to a store, ask for just three of the same models (e.g. XY 18" Medium Crash) from a competitive brand, and test them for consistency.

⁴ With respect to the character of the cymbal.

the 'particular shape' of the cymbal should be obtained by *hammering* it into that 'particular shape'. Might we then conclude that *literally nobody* makes 'cast' cymbals?

So *where's* the difference?

Let's take a different angle.

All cymbals start out by being cast into pieces of bronze alloy. Then these pieces are rolled and tempered. Then one proceeds to generate the cymbal's final shape (we hammer all of our bronze cymbals). Since other techniques are used after casting the mold to generate the final shape, the term 'cast' is negated, as it mandates that the casting process generates the final shape. Aha. So all cymbals are 'cast' and 'non-cast' at the same time? Actually, only the alloy itself is cast, the process of manufacturing the actual cymbal shape goes beyond casting in the sense of the above definition. Apparently, neither term can be used exclusively for any cymbals. This is true for *all* cymbals

factors: cost, and human fatigue. And, we never utilize a machine in the manufacturing steps crucially affecting the sound, desired quality, and consistency of a cymbal.

Example: All our bronze cymbals are lathed by hand. Since we hammer these cymbals by hand, we do not have a perfectly uniform shape at hand. The hand lathing adjusts for the minute inconsistencies. There is at present no automatic lathe that can do that. (Conceptually, a robot could be built to sense the inconsistencies and adjust for them. If we wanted to get such a machine, it would have to be a lathe of the sort they use in the defense industry, costing millions of dollars. However, we don't think you want to pay \$5,000 for a 16" Crash cymbal.) At any rate, the point is: we hand lathe, because we get a better sound from it.

Yes, they'll say, but you use a

read our competitor's literature to put things into perspective. You'll be surprised to find out how they *actually* make their professional cymbals. And be sure to read between the lines. What's all this mean to you? Isn't it just



bickering between cymbal companies that jealously guard their turf and market share? You might well be right there. Who cares how they're made! If they sound great and last, and the price is right, go for it. What matters is the cymbal's sound and consistency of quality.* Only extensive

testing of various cymbals can train your own ear. Ours ought to be a nice point of reference.

Our code of ethics has led us to strive to unlock the last bit of sound for you, and we have found accurate human controlled manufacturing to be the only way to do it right. Or so we think.

DIFFERENT ETHICS

made. Question: How would you make a 'non-cast' cymbal? You'd have to at least start out by mixing the metals and casting them into a mold so that you can then proceed with the other steps, wouldn't you?

Our code of ethics mandates: if it doesn't make a big difference, or if it serves to confuse the issue, then don't say it.

... On 'Hand' vs. 'Machine' Manufacture

Here's another one. As some people will have you believe, all Paiste cymbals are churned out by some high-tech robot machine in this industrial behemoth located in Europe. Nothing could be further from the truth. (Who started this rumor anyway?) Our bronze cymbals are *all*, to varying degrees (descending in order of quality) made by a *human being*, period, once and for all. Where we utilize machines in the manufacturing process is mandated by two



machine hammer, and we use a hand hammer for our top cymbals. (Here we go: skew the truth to make a point in your favor.) To be sure, we use traditional hand hammering to fine tune *all of our bronze cymbals*, after hammering them into shape with the aid of an air-pressure controlled hammer. 'Machine' hand hammering occurs onto an anvil like hand hammering. The craftsman controls the pressure with a foot pedal. He leads the cymbal with his hands to allow hammer strokes to occur exactly and evenly so that the cymbal is hammered into the intended shape uniformly (and checks it against the *one* master cymbal, by the way). Bottom line is: we use the human controlled machine hammer for the bulk of the hammering to shape the cymbal as an aid against human fatigue. It takes the brute force out of it, yet still allows *full human control* over the hammering. Thus, the artisan can concentrate on the shape he's creating, instead of thinking how darn tired his arm is.

We recommend that you re-

... On Ethics

So, what's the bottom line? You can't believe everything you read or hear? Companies will engage in misinformation to garner an advantage? Big business is bad and unscrupulous? We don't know for sure. We can only speak for ourselves. Our code of ethics commands us to tell the truth, or at least we'll die trying. At any rate, next time you want to buy a cymbal, bring your own sticks, and your own opinion. And don't forget to listen to our cymbals as well. They're great!

... But don't take our word for it. Check it out yourself.

P.S.: We do appreciate the individuals out there who have in the past supported our efforts. Thank you from our heart.

PAiSte

CYMBALS SOUNDS GONGS

Paiste Headquarters,
Kantonstrasse,
CH-6207 Nottwil/LU,
Switzerland

* And thousands of others. Excuse our brevity, please.

* Hint: call all cymbal companies and request their literature.

* An example for an entirely cast idiophone would be a church bell, which is solely poured into its final shape.

* For example, our Signature Series is made the way we described it. Would anybody doubt, that our manufacturing produces results?

Yamaha Maple Custom Kit

by Adam J. Budofsky

The popularity of Yamaha drums would indicate that many drummers have been quite happy with the way they sound. (Scores of Vinnie and Weckl clones bear this out.) But others have felt that Yamaha's birch drums tend to be a bit dry—perhaps not bright enough. Apparently Yamaha is trying to address this opinion with their *Maple Custom* kits.

Though it isn't mentioned in their recent ads or in their catalog, the press release for the *Maple Custom* kits states that their lug placement design is actually based on Noble & Cooley's patented "nodal point" design. This, together with Yamaha's "small-lug" design, all-maple shells, and choice of Evans heads, is meant to give the *Maple Custom* kits a more "reverberant, wide-open sound," according to the company. To a large extent they have accomplished their goals. We'll talk more about this in a minute. First let's address the kit's...

Looks

Let's be honest—a lot of people listen with their eyes. In this sense, Yamaha has a jump on the competition, because these drums look great. Whether you're knocked out by the clear lacquer finish or not (available colors are red, black, natural, turquoise, and blue maple, plus a metallic purple), the careful attention to detail and aesthetics here is undeniable. From the brass-plated lugs and

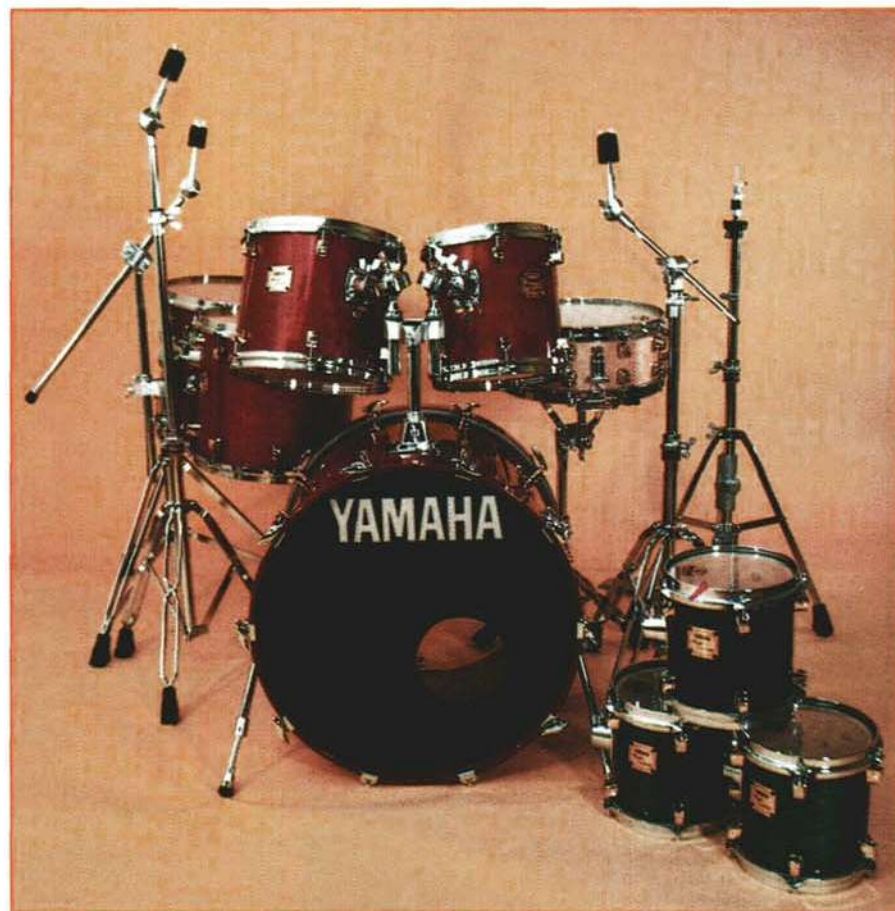


Photo by Scott G. Bienstock

name plates to the art deco-styled bass drum lug handles (and matching drum key), Yamaha has designed a very classy package. Especially gorgeous is the natural maple jazz configuration; the brass lugs really look snappy here because they highlight the natural maple finish so nicely.

What's that? Looks aren't everything, you say?

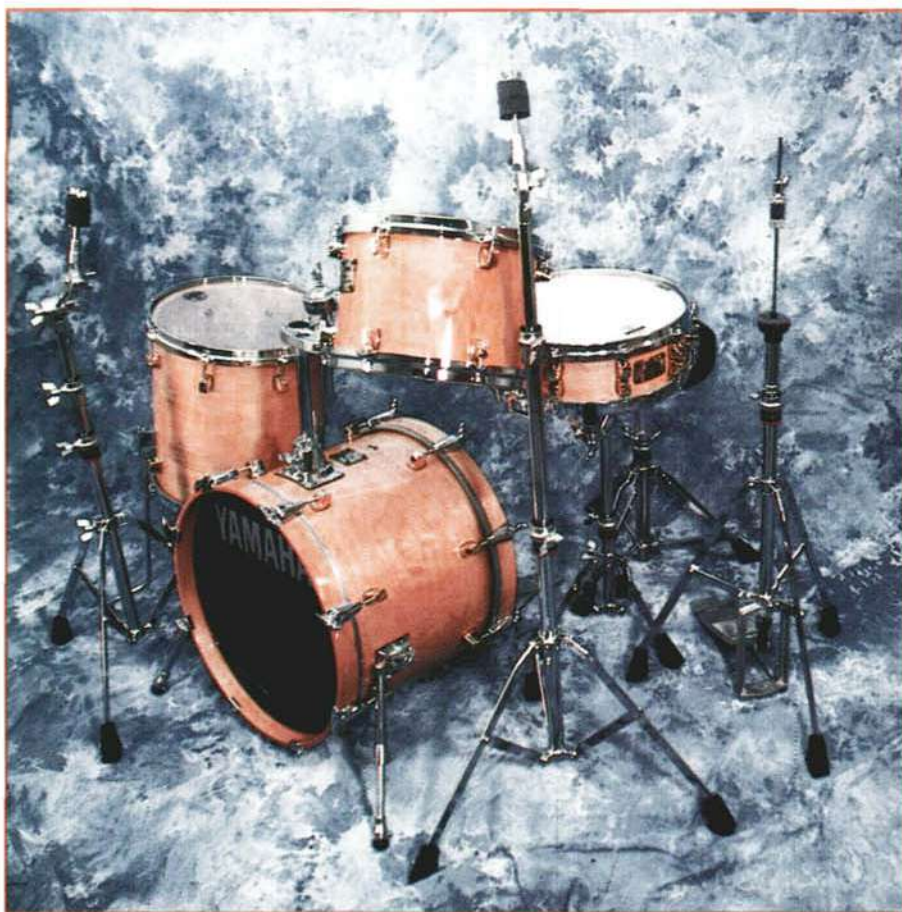
Construction

Well, these drums are also built like Yamaha means it. Sturdy shells with smooth bearing edges are accurately joined by Yamaha's "staggered seam" construction, which joins three sets of plies in three different places on the shell. (Snare drums and rack toms feature 7-ply, 7mm shells; bass drums and floor toms are 10-ply, 10mm.) Yamaha

says that their shells' accurate roundness and smooth joins are due to their *Air-Seal System* construction, which pushes excess glue and air out of the shells.

We received two kits for review—a four-piece jazz set and a six-piece set. The jazz kit consisted of an 8x12 tom, a 14x14 floor tom, and a 14x18 bass drum. The six-piece had 10x10 and 10x12 rack toms, 12x14 and 14x16 hanging "floor" toms, and a 16x22 bass drum.

Two *Maple Custom* snare drums came to the office—51/2x14 and 4x14 versions of the same model. Each drum came in the natural maple finish and featured ten of Yamaha's small lugs per side, plus stainless steel snares, Evans *Brush White 1000* batter heads and *Glass snare 300* bottom heads, and die-cast hoops. The snare strainers were smooth and quiet, and connected to the snares via a cord.



Tom-toms on both kits featured Yamaha *Power Hoops* and Evans *Tom Tom 1000* heads top and bottom; bass drums had Evans *Genera EQ-2s* in back, Yamaha ebony heads in front. (The four-piece's front head had no hole; the six-piece had a 6" hole.)

Yamaha's traditionally sturdy, nicely plated hardware is used throughout. Of particular note are the springless lugs, which receive the lug bolts snugly yet accurately; they really make you feel like you're tuning a professional instrument. The jazz kit came with one standard and one "standard/boom" stand, as did the six-piece, which also featured another cymbal boom off of the "floor tom" stand. There's also an extra slot in the bigger kit's tom holder for an extra cymbal extension.

The jazz kit came with single-braced

hardware, the six-piece with double-braced, except for the single-braced hi-hat stand. Hi-hat and bass drum pedals were modest yet completely workable. All featured good spring tension adjustments.

Sound

As we said before, the idea of an all-maple kit (Yamaha's first and the result of two years of R&D) was meant to add a bit more brightness and "reverberation" to their catalog. And it seems like they've accomplished that. There's definitely a brighter sound here than Yamaha is known for in their top-notch drums. Projection and tone were pretty nice in the toms, and the snare drums were particularly cracking and sensitive, if a little bit dry. (Don't even bother with muffling on the 4" drum.)

You might want to experiment with head choice, though, especially on the bass drums, and particularly on the 18". *Genera* heads are definitely a different animal, and one that some people have a taste for and others don't. I got the best sound when taking the sound control rings out of each head. For the 18" drum, this still left me feeling like the sound was too quiet and muffled—more like a "tiny" rock sound than a bebop sound, which is probably the situation you'd most likely use an 18" bass drum in. Maybe I'm being too subjective here, but a little noise here and there is nice; overtones are part of the sound, after all. A single-ply head would surely accomplish this. On the other hand, if you're looking to do some recording, today's engineer—in his quest for the ever-cleaner sound—will probably love these drums the way they come.

Conclusions

We in the drum world should consider ourselves lucky: The standard for quality in drum manufacture truly remains at a very high level (unlike most other products in this throwaway society), and Yamaha's new *Maple Custom* drums illustrate that fact. With the *Maple Custom*, Yamaha has for the most part done just what it set out to do—create a little more reverberant and wide-open sound in a solidly constructed and truly attractive set of drums. Whether or not you choose to experiment with head combinations in order to get your desired sound, you can be confident that you've got a very high-quality set to start out with. The rest is up to you.

List price for the four-piece kit, including the 4x14 snare drum, is \$3,385. The six-piece kit, including the 5 1/2x14 snare, lists for \$4,780. Optional configurations are available within all Yamaha drumset lines, and can vary significantly in price. Check with Yamaha or your local dealer for more information.

Roc-N-Soc Lunar Series Throne

■ by Adam J. Budofsky

"Excellent bass drum sound, dude!"

"Rippin' China cymbal, man."

"Dig that killin'...seat"?

No, it might not be the most glamorous part of the drumset, but the quality and position of your throne can affect the comfort, wear, and agility of virtually every part of your body. And you can multiply those effects exponentially by the number of hours, nights, weeks, and years you sit behind your kit.

The Roc-N-Soc company is out to raise the underrated drum "throne" to its duly respectable station by offering a wide range of saddles designed to properly prop us drummers up. The throne we were recently sent for review is Roc-N-Soc's *Lunar Series* featuring hydraulic height adjustment, a backrest, and a five-point base.

Starting from the bottom and going up, it would seem that the five-point base is a bit of overkill. Roc-N-Soc also offers more traditional fold-up three-point bases that are plenty sturdy and don't require a separate trap case. Or you can order Roc-N-Soc's retro-fit seat kits, which feature several different hub sizes to accommodate most existing stool hardware.

The throne's hydraulic main shaft works admirably, with minute height adjustments easily attainable, and it comes in two basic versions—16" - 23" and 20" - 28". There should be enough spread there for most players, though the company can provide versions that go down to 14" or up to 31".

Our test *Lunar* throne came with Roc-N-Soc's new *Hugger* seat. (The considerably larger *Original* seat is available for those who like a bigger bench.) Both sad-



dles are bicycle-style seats. (I'd recommend borrowing a friend's bicycle-style seat for a while to see whether you like this type of feel; there is a significant difference.) Seats also come in a choice of grey, blue, or red.

The cushion was manufactured very professionally. It looks like it would hold up for quite a long time, with heavy-duty vinyl sides, strong but comfortable padding, and tough stitching. The cloth seat panel is wonderful—no more of that sweaty paranoid feeling walking around the bar in between sets (if you know what I mean).

A couple of things about the seat were difficult for me to get used to, though they might not be a problem for everyone. First, the front part of our *Lunar Series* seat is raised a good amount from the middle section, as is a "ridge" along the back part of the seat. These two inclines create sort of a pocket that your butt is supposed to fit snugly into. At first this felt very secure to me, but after playing for a while, the seat's slight backward tilt seemed to force my derriere into that back ridge, which became a bit annoying. When I tried to push myself forward to avoid this, the front hump added a bit of pressure, where, shall we say, I didn't really need it at that particular moment.

Now, Roc-N-Soc's *Nitro* thrones have the ability to be switched so that the pitch of the seat is forward rather than back, so if the *Lunar's* arrangement bothers you, be aware that other options are available.

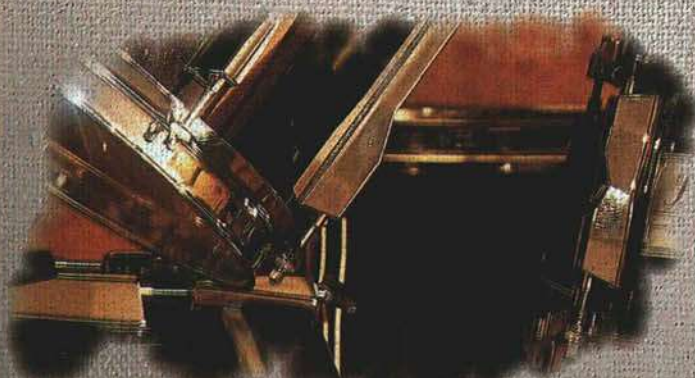
Onward and upward, the *Lunar's* backrest is also cloth-covered, angles slightly for positioning, and moves up and down and back and forth with enough possibilities to satisfy just about anybody. Of course, a backrest has become a very attractive option for lots of players with back problems. I found that not only was my back much more rested after four sets than it usually is, but I could put a lot more power than normal into the bass drum on certain beats. Even if you don't rely on the backrest too much while you're actually playing, you might find that leaning back on it even for a few seconds in between songs can give you enough of a rest to keep you going through those long nights.

One more unusual aspect about this throne: Because of the design of the hydraulic height adjustment, the stool rotates freely. If you're used to one that doesn't, this feature might surprise you. On songs requiring certain beats, I found that as I leaned into my hi-hat, the seat was rotating in the opposite direction—a weird feeling, I can assure you. Keep in mind, though, that the *Lunar Series* is also available with a threaded height adjustment (for \$20 less), so again you have another option. But remember that this is just another reason why you might want to spend some time with this seat—or any other seat, for that matter—before you buy.

Roc-N-Soc is sincerely trying to offer thrones on a par in quality and innovation with the best drumsets made today. Their hardware is top-notch, and they offer enough options to fill most drummers' needs. They don't come cheap; our test model lists at \$249.95 (\$189.95 without the backrest), which actually isn't out of line with other companies' high-quality seats. But the proper drum throne should be a matter of serious investment and research, and Roc-N-Soc is one brand you should definitely look into.



TWO YEARS AGO
THE PERFECT BLEND OF ARTISTRY,
CRAFTSMANSHIP AND TECHNOLOGY
CREATED AN INSTRUMENT OF
UNMATCHED ACOUSTIC EXCELLENCE...
PRESENTING THE SEQUEL.



INTRODUCING CZX STUDIO

CZX STUDIO. THE NATURAL ADDITION TO THE MOST HIGHLY ACCLAIMED DRUM SERIES IN MODERN PERCUSSION. CZX STUDIO. THE EVOLUTION OF THE MOST COMPLEX SHELL MATERIAL AVAILABLE TO THE PROFESSIONAL DRUMMER. CZX STUDIO. HAND CRAFTED EXACTING AIR CHAMBERS ENGINEERED TO PRODUCE UNEQUALLED AURAL BRILLIANCE. CZX STUDIO. THE ULTIMATE STATEMENT OF ARRIVAL.

FIVE YEARS OF RESEARCH INTO THE MANY THEORIES BEHIND SHELL DENSITY AND ITS EFFECT ON THE PROPERTIES OF RESONATION PRODUCED CZX CUSTOM. THE DRUM SERIES WAS VOTED "THE MOST INNOVATIVE PERCUSSION PRODUCT" SOON AFTER ITS INTRODUCTION. TWO ADDITIONAL YEARS HAVE NOW BEEN SPENT FOCUSING UPON THE INHERENT ATTRIBUTES PARTICULAR TO BIRCH AND ITS INTEGRATION WITH CZX SHELL DESIGN TECHNOLOGY. THE RESULT IS CZX STUDIO. HIGH DENSITY, ONE HUNDRED PERCENT BIRCH SHELLS, HAND CRAFTED INTO PERCUSSION MASTERWORKS WITHOUT COMPROMISE.

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E-mu Systems Procussion

by Paul Van Patten

In Brief

E-mu Systems' *Procussion* offers 1,024 exceptional sounds in an available 128-kit format. The sounds can be combined, altered, and stored—all via a vast array of on-board programming parameters and memory capability. This all comes in a single rack-space unit weighing only 41/2 pounds. With several times the number of sounds and kits as its nearest competitor—but at a price only a few hundred dollars higher (\$995)—the *Procussion* represents a quantum leap forward in sound module design.

The *Procussion*, by E-mu Systems, Inc., is a multi-timbral percussion sound module. Its voice-generating power is provided by 140 16-bit samples borrowed from E-mu's top-of-the-line *Emulator III* sampling keyboard, four classic waveforms, and 22 harmonic waveforms—all stored in ROM.

The user has the capability to dissect these individual samples and re-assemble them into an infinite number of entirely new voices, by combining part(s) of one instrument with part(s) of another or with any of the waveforms. This process is called "additive synthesis." The composite sound is referred to as a "stack" in E-mu talk. There are a total of 548 factory stacks in memory, and the user can build an additional 512 custom stacks—bringing the number of instantly accessible sounds to a whopping 1,024. These stacks are organized into 128 "kits," 64 of which are user-programmable.

The *Procussion* features 32-voice polyphony, thereby allowing the user to take full advantage of its voice-layering capabilities. Each drumpad or keyboard



key can simultaneously trigger up to eight samples and/or waveforms. The *Procussion* can respond multi-timbrally to all 16 MIDI channels at one time, making it especially useful for multi-track sequencing and recording. Also featured are six 1/4" audio outputs, which can be configured as three stereo pairs or six individual polyphonic submixes, each with fully programmable panning.

The *Procussion* is the most user-friendly and easy-to-learn MIDI-based percussion instrument I've encountered to date. Each and every parameter is accessed by only four buttons and one data entry dial on the front panel. A special tribute goes out to Mr. Riley Smith at E-mu for writing the 116-page manual. Finally a manufacturer has successfully written an operation manual whose text is 100% cohesive, clear, and in non-technical plain English. Also included are many helpful diagrams and illustrations that visually guide the user through the information being covered. Other manufacturers should seriously examine what has been accomplished here.

The Layout

The *Procussion* occupies one conventional 19" audio rack space, and weighs just 41/2 pounds. Across the front panel are the data-entry buttons, which include: Master Menu Select, Edit Menu Select, Cursor Control, and Enter. Also on the front panel are the power switch, volume control, the data entry control knob, a 16x2 backlit display, and the "MIDI activity LED"—a helpful feature that indicates MIDI signal reception. Above each of the edit buttons is an LED that lights when the edit modes are activated—indicating which set of parameters is currently being accessed. The back panel contains the power plug, MIDI In, Out, and Thru jacks, and the six 1/4" audio outputs.

The Sounds

The *Procussion's* samples include scores of kicks, snares, toms, crash and ride cymbals, hi-hats, and Latin and hand percussion instruments. Also included are some novel sound effects and a variety of synthesized sounds. Additionally, there are four classic waveforms (sine, triangle, square, and sawtooth), as well as 22 harmonic waveforms.

Each sampled instrument is clear, powerful, and authentic-sounding. But it is the vast array of layering, editing, and other control parameters that give the *Procussion* such incredible power. So let's examine these functions.

Stacks

A *Procussion* "stack" is a composite sound made up of anywhere from one to four of the samples and/or waveforms combined together. If the user wishes to edit a factory stack, it must first be copied to a user kit location. (We'll cover the "stack copy" function later.) If the user wishes to create a "custom stack" from scratch, he or she has complete freedom to choose any combination of samples and/or waveforms.

Each individual layer has a vast array of user-programmable and totally independent sound parameters associated with it. These include: delay/sound start, reverse, alternate envelope (which includes attack, hold, and decay parameters), pitch envelope, LFO/pitch, LFO/volume, stack modulation, stack footswitch, switch mode, switch group, switch source, switch points, hi-hat modes, audition layer, pan, volume, and tune.

"Stack tune" allows you to independently select the coarse- and fine-tune settings for each layer within a stack. An eight-octave range is provided, adjust-

continued on page 112

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In The Pocket

by David Garibaldi



MUSIC KEY

HH	X
SD	●
BD	■

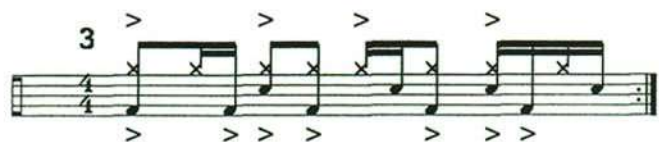
Many drummers, myself included, have at times fallen into the line of thinking that says if a set of exercises has a certain degree of complexity, then those exercises have more worth—that complexity determines difficulty. Yet some of my most challenging musical moments have actually been in situations where I was required to play *simply*. The following exercises will explore this side of the argument.

These exercises aren't necessarily technically difficult, but they will help you in developing the concept of staying "in the pocket." This simply means keeping the time feeling good—keeping it steady and unwavering, with all the subdivisions played accurately.

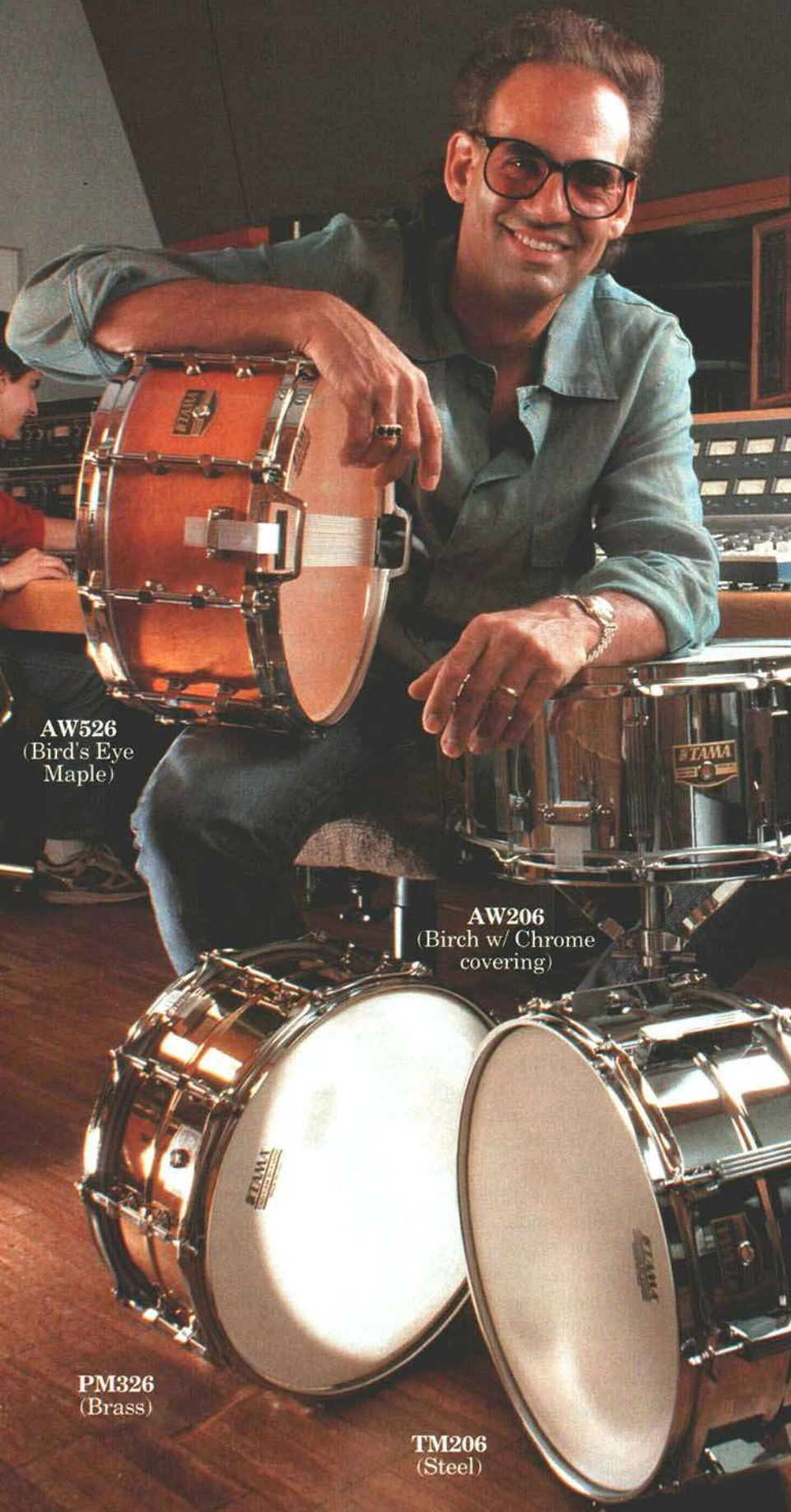
Playing the simplest 8th-note beat can be just as challenging as playing complex 16th-note time—if the focus becomes making the time feel good. This of course means first getting past any coordination problems. It also involves hitting the drums in a consistent way so as to produce a consistent sound. This "pocket" must be maintained as the patterns and fills are performed in the context of a song.

One of my teachers used to say, "Repetition is the mother of learning." I laughed every time he said it, but as I grew older I realized that that phrase is exactly how all of this drumming "stuff" works. You practice things over and over until you're sick of it, then you do it some more! Repetition is what great groove playing is all about. Consistency is one of the things repetition teaches us, and it's a quality that is found in all of the top players.

These examples are basically one rhythm with a few slight variations, and they're designed to be played from top to bottom without stopping. Play eight or sixteen bars of an exercise and then move to the next. They can be performed in or out of sequence, adding fills if you like—just as long as you keep the time going. Try recording yourself playing these examples, and play along with a click as well as without. All the exercises can be played as straight 16ths or as swinging 16ths.



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Creating A Percussion Arrangement

■ by Sue Hadjopoulos

Percussion is an all-encompassing term for a wide variety of instruments. These instruments produce many sounds of different texture and color, and can be very effective within songs when placed in the right spot and at the right time. And with the advent of electronic percussion and sampling, our choices have increased dramatically. So how do we choose from the numerous sounds and instrumentation available to us?

Feel Vs. Formula

A musician's interpretation of a song, generally known as his or her "style," depends primarily on feeling or intuition. But there are some guidelines or formulas that can be very helpful when deciding what to play, especially when you are just starting out.

When I am asked to add percussion to a song, I listen to the song for its sentiment. How does the music make me feel? What do the lyrics say? Is the mood upbeat, or is it melancholy? I want to create a mood, and the sounds I use are chosen to touch off this emotional response.

Put simply, percussion seems to evoke an instinctual emotional response within us. For example, Latin percussion instruments such as congas and timbales evoke the primitive, powerful, earthy side of human nature, whereas bells, chimes, and vibes evoke the ethereal.

I work with the artist or producer to find out just what they want to convey. Then I elaborate on this to create a mood by translating their feelings into percussive sounds. Unfortunately, there are no clear-cut rules to follow. You must use your own sensitivity and experience and allow yourself to "go with the flow." But there *are* certain rules of music composition—or formulas—that you can use to create an arrangement for a song.

Integrating And Sweetening

Let's consider the role of the percussionist on a session as filling one of two roles: as a rhythm section player adding an integral rhythm to the music, or as a "sweetener" of tracks, adding color here and there, usually as an overdub.

When playing as part of the rhythm section, I want to "lock in" to the other players; I want to create a rhythmic, repetitive pattern that fits into the bass and drum parts like an interlocking puzzle. To do this I create an arrangement for the entire song and stick to it, noting whether the music follows a two-,



Photo by Lisa Wales

four-, or eight-measure pattern. I see if the song changes time signatures, and whether there are any extra measures added. I also listen for changes in feel between the verses, chorus, and bridge, and I change my part accordingly. These feel changes can range from slight nuances to actual changes in tempo.

It's very important to work with drummers to decide who fills where. Normally drummers will end eight- or sixteen-measure phrases with a fill, so try not to play over his or her fill. I either cop the fill exactly or leave it out completely, otherwise it will sound sloppy. Remember, courtesy between players is important. Most complaints I hear from drummers and percussionists concern this. Drummers feel that percussionists always play through their fills, while percussionists complain that drummers don't leave them any "space." Be aware of this and communicate with the other players.

You can also make a song more dynamic by adding different instruments to the track, and by polyrhythmic layering of one or more instruments to fill out the arrangement, building up to the climax of the song. Start sparsely, and build with each chorus turnaround until the end of the song. But remember, when recording, the simplest ideas are the best.

When doing a "sweetening" session where I am asked to just add percussion in spots, I generally follow the song's melodic line. I like to follow the vocals and emphasize certain words or phrases. (Most artists lay down "reference" vocals on the track as a guide.) To accent specific areas of the track or for special effects, you can experiment with sounds and engineering techniques to make the ordinary sound unusual. For example, I have flanged timbales during a solo and digitally delayed congas. I've also used sandpaper, thrown change into a cowbell, made a reco reco sound like a trash can, and used a cuica to sound like an owl. Virtually anything that makes noise can be used for percussive special effects.

You Must Remember This...

There are a few practical rules and lessons all session players should always keep in mind. Knowing them can save you and your co-workers time, aggravation, and money.

- * Don't overplay. The studio is not the place to start soloing to "show off your chops."
- * Avoid the tendency to "throw in the kitchen sink." Don't be afraid to leave space; what you *leave out* is as important as what you play. Sometimes the best percussion is implied rather than actually played.
- * Consider how you would re-create the recording in a live touring situation. What you play now may have to be replicated later under very different circumstances.
- * Taste is they key. One of my teachers used to say, "When in doubt, leave it out. But in any case, keep your place."
- * And most important: *Be on time for the session!*

The Essentials

The two greatest assets a session player can have are good time and consistency. Good time is essential, especially when playing with click tracks, and consistency will allow you to create an arrangement and stick to it. Work on these qualities and your success as a session percussionist is bound to escalate. And remember, the limits of the imagination are the only limits to creating an ingenious percussion arrangement within a song.



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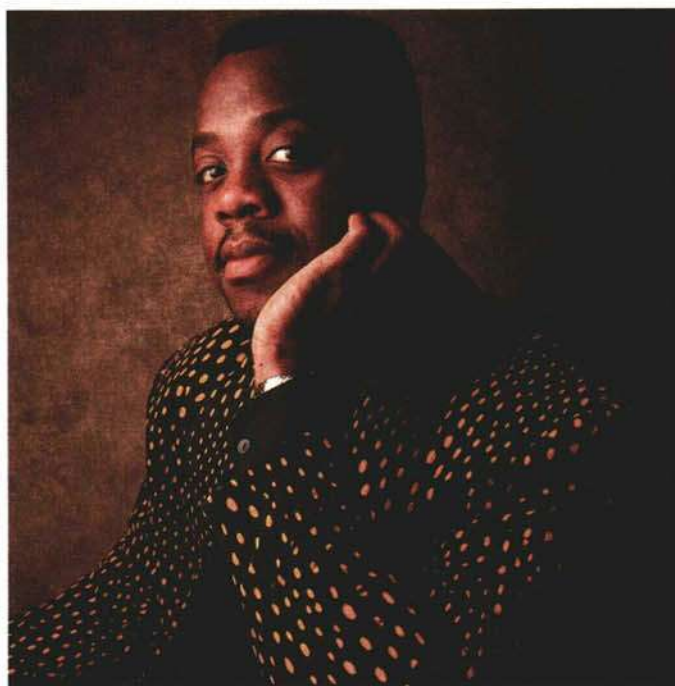
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Dave Weckl: Style And Analysis

by Brian Butler



MUSIC KEY

Open	O	R.C.	C.C.
H.H.	X		
T.T.			
S.D.			
F.T.			
B.D.			
H.H.	X		
w/foot			
Splash	O		
		Add'l	Toms

A lot of attention has been paid in the past to Dave Weckl's amazing soloing capabilities. These excerpts deal more with his grooves and his gift for interacting with an ensemble.

The first example is taken from the tune "Here And There," from Dave's solo album, *Master Plan*. Section A begins after the two-bar guitar break, 60 bars into the tune. To get comfortable with this metric modulation, practice going in and out of the two meters every four bars or so, using the fills to set up the downbeats of the new feel each time. You could also program a drum machine to play the pattern. A metronome would be impractical because of the changing meter.



Measure 9 "Feel"

The first staff of music contains a sequence of notes with various articulations. Above the staff, there are markings: '>' above the first note, '>' above the second note, '3' above a triplet of notes, and '>' above the eighth note. The notes are mostly eighth and sixteenth notes, some beamed together. There are also some notes with 'x' marks above them, possibly indicating specific articulations or fingerings.

(9)

Musical notation for exercise (9) on a single staff. The exercise consists of four measures. The first measure contains a quarter note, an eighth note, a quarter note, and a quarter note, followed by a quarter rest. The second measure contains a quarter note, a quarter note, a quarter note, and a quarter note, followed by a quarter rest. The third measure contains a quarter note, a quarter note, a quarter note, and a quarter note, followed by a quarter rest. The fourth measure contains a quarter note, a quarter note, a quarter note, and a quarter note, followed by a quarter rest. The notation includes various ornaments and accents: a circle with a dot above the first quarter note in the first measure, a cross above the first quarter note in the second measure, a circle with a dot above the first quarter note in the third measure, and a circle with a dot above the first quarter note in the fourth measure. There are also accents (>) above the second and third quarter notes in the second measure, and above the second and third quarter notes in the third measure. The exercise is marked with a (9) at the beginning.

Musical notation for the 'R' exercise, showing a sequence of eighth notes on a single staff with a rhythmic pattern of R R L L R R L L R R L L R R L L.

The last example is from "Got A Match," from the first *Elektric Band* album. Practice the groove slower at first, around 100 bpm. And repeat bars 1-4, exaggerating the dynamics. When you bring it up to speed, this will feel very natural and groove real hard. Keep in mind that *all* of the snare notes are to be "ghosted" unless otherwise indicated with an accent. When the groove repeats, Dave plays the ride cymbal bell instead of the hi-hat. The first bar begins after the intro.



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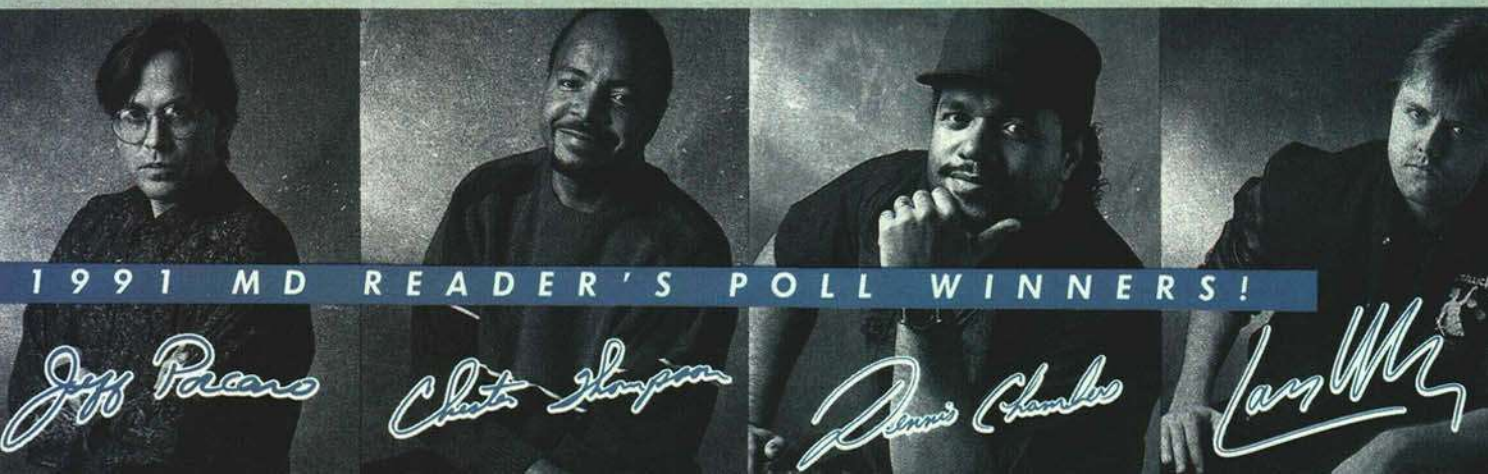
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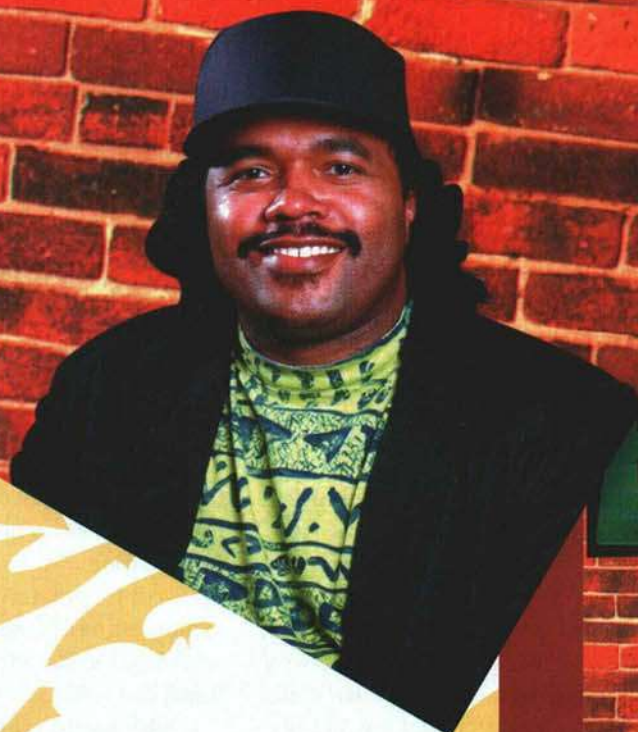
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Dave Black

Host Of This Year's PASIC And Much More

by Robyn Flans

I first heard Dave Black's name over ten years ago, in an interview with Louie Bellson. Louie said it was "kids" like Dave who were the future—touting him as someone interested in all aspects of the percussion field, including writing and composing.

*Well, Dave Black is now, at age 32, a widely published composer/arranger who has written for the bands of Louie Bellson, Sammy Nestico, Bill Watrous, Bobby Shew, and Ed Shaughnessy, and is the recipient of consecutive ASCAP Composer Awards. In addition, he has also received two Grammy participation/nomination certificates: one for his contribution as a musician on Anita O'Day's album *In A Mellow Tone* and the other for his contribution as album-track composer on Louie Bellson's *Airmail Special*.*

*Along with Louie and Henry Bellson, Dave is the co-author of *Contemporary Brush Techniques*. He is also co-author, along with Sandy Feldstein, of *Alfred's Drum Method, Books 1 & 2*, *Alfred's Beginning Drumset Method*, and *Alfred's Beginning Snare Drum Duets*.*

According to "the Percussive Arts Society's Bob Schietroma, Black was chosen to host this year's PAS convention because of these accomplishments—in addition to his organizational skills, his role as an educator, his industry contacts, and the fact that his position as Instrumental Music Editor at Alfred Publishing affords him the time to coordinate this seemingly awesome task.

RF: When did you become interested in percussion education?

DB: That happened during college. I was a performance major, and performing is what I always thought I would do. But things started changing in the music business around 1980, and I started to realize that in order for me to be able to survive, I'd have to become more diversified. I had always been interested in composing and writing, and the situation prompted me to develop those skills. Composing also gave me another outlet with which to express myself. Drums are wonderful, and I enjoy performing very much, but it's basically an accompaniment instrument. I also had harmonic and melodic ideas inside that I wanted to express. So it all worked out for the best.

RF: As involved in education as you are, what do you see lacking in the system today?

DB: Kids today don't have the advantages that I had. I had a junior high band director and a high school composition teacher who were tremendous inspirations. What we had in junior high school, most high schools and colleges didn't have. Our band director had the budget to buy a full set of timpani and a full array of mallet instruments. He was the kind of teacher



who was there at 6:00 in the morning to work with the students until 7:00 at night. He made sure all his drummers and percussionists could play mallet instruments and timpani, and he emphasized ear training, so we had to learn key signatures and composition. We had to study conducting and all the things that—unfortunately—most junior high kids don't do. Most drummers say, "Gee, I don't like this, I just want to play drumset," but I said, "Gee, I really like this." I tried to soak up as much as I could.

I think another thing kids are missing now is the opportunity to hear live music. When I was growing up you could go to a club for \$5 and hear an abundance of music, which was an education in itself. Most of the clubs now charge \$15 at least, and many have a two-drink minimum. How can a junior high school kid deal with that?

RF: Has your emphasis always been jazz?

DB: Yes. The first records I bought in junior high were a Benny Goodman record, a Nat King Cole record, and the soundtrack to *West Side Story*. I never really bought Beatles albums or any of that kind of thing. Chicago was my favorite group back then, but I didn't get into Blood, Sweat & Tears, America, or Queen until I got into college. I was pretty single-minded, and it wasn't until I really became more mature that I saw some musical value in all that stuff.

RF: So who are some of your heroes?

DB: As I said before, my junior high band director, Mr. Weems, and my high school composition teacher, Gordon Gustin. And when I was 16, Louie Bellson came into my life. My high school had a jazz band called the Starliners that was directed by Joe Carley, a retired Air Force clarinetist. We had an annual concert called a Swing-in, where we'd have guest artists. Louie Bellson happened to be the guest artist my last year in high

school, and that night completely changed my life. When Louie was asked to do this concert, Joe Carley told him that he could either have a hotel room or "stay with the kid drummer." Louie's response, of course, was, "I'll stay with the kid drummer. That way we'll get to hang out." Of course I was ecstatic—until Joe Carley told me that Louie and I would play a tune together on which there would also be a drum battle. Then I was scared to death!

When the time came, I picked Louie up at the airport and he stayed with my family for three days. Here we had one of the most famous drummers in the world in our house, and he was just like part of the family. We were all so excited. We got a letter from him about four days after he left, thanking us for our hospitality. I was going to write him a letter, but my little sister beat me to it. About a week later, he wrote her back. We kept writing, and for some reason, something clicked.

I had never planned on coming to California for college. I lived back East, in Maryland, and by my junior year of high school I'd already been accepted to the University of Miami. Half my relatives lived in Dallas, Texas, so my other choice was North Texas State University. But after about six months of friendship, Louie said, "Why don't you come out to Cal State Northridge. Joel Leach has a great jazz band out here. Besides, I live in Northridge, and you can study with me." I graduated high school in June at 18 years of age, and I was on a Greyhound Bus to California in August.

Two other influences—as far as drums go—would be Joel Leach at Cal State Northridge, and Sandy Feldstein, with whom I have co-authored a lot of books and who has also been instrumental in helping to open a lot of doors for me. And I have to mention my parents, because it was really their support that allowed me all the opportunities.

RF: What was the chronology of your performing and writing careers?

DB: I finished college in 1981 with a performance degree, and I wanted to get out and play. I went out on the road for three years, doing some cruise-ship stuff, working with entertainers like Tony Bennett and doing Broadway-type shows. I had started doing some writing; I think I had one thing published at the time.

I got to see lots of the world and I got to work with a lot of

people I admire, but eventually I got tired of being on the road. I was also getting the itch to do more composing and writing, so I quit the road and I started concentrating on that.

RF: How did you actually get into the book writing?

DB: I started at Alfred Publishing in 1985. I was working in marketing at that time; now I'm the instrumental music editor. Alfred had published my first stage band chart in 1980, so I knew Sandy Feldstein at Alfred and I just kind of fell into it. My

first collaboration on a book was with Louie Bellson and his brother, Hank. They had written a brush book, and because of the nature of brushes, trying to come up with a way to describe and diagram the different movements so that a novice could visualize them and do them was proving difficult. As a result, the book had been sitting around for several weeks. I told Sandy I'd like to see it, so he let me take it home. I was able to come up with a way to make it work, and I also added three other chapters to it.

The way the *Alfred's Drum Method* books came about was that Sandy had wanted to update the Haskell Harr book for many years. Haskell Harr published the *Haskell Harr Method* in 1937. Roy Burns updated it 20 years later, and Sandy said he wanted to update it again.

RF: The ads say it's a new method. What new material was added to it?

DB: We took a book that was 50 years old and updated some of the concepts. We tried to keep the look similar but explain things in a different way. The one thing that is very different is that we took what we taught in each lesson and combined those things in a combination study, including full-length solos. When we taught five-stroke rolls, we'd put in a Sousa march that incorporated five-stroke rolls so a student could see how all the concepts fit together. We did the seven-stroke roll section over completely to try to simplify the explanation.

RF: After you got more involved with writing and composing, were you worried that you would stop getting calls to perform?

DB: Not really. I believe that everything goes in cycles, and that's what I tend to do. I tend to jump into something, go at it 110% until I've exhausted that possibility, and then go on to the next thing. I had traveled and played for so many years that I wanted to take time off to write and compose. Then as that started going, album projects started coming up. It really worked itself out.

RF: How did the album work come about?

"Some people have this terrible misconception that if you're going to be in music, you're either going to play or you're not. I don't think they realize there are a lot of other options."



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PowerStroke 3 Coated
PowerStroke 3 Clear

CS PinStripe High Strength
CS Smooth White
CS Transparent
CS High Strength
CS PinStripe
PowerStroke 3
PowerStroke 3
Falams KS Coated
Falams KS Coated
Falams KS Coated
Falams KS Smooth White
Falams KS Smooth White CS
Falams KS Natural

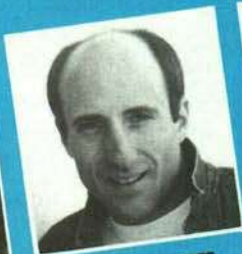
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PTS Coated Mellow
PTS Coated Dark
PTS Coated Super Dark
PTS Coated Bright
PTS Coated Mellow
PTS Black Dot Dark
PTS Black Dot Super Dark
PTS PinStripe Super Dark
PTS PinStripe
Falams KS Natural CS
PinStripe Regular

PinStripe Coated
Legacy Thin
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Bass Drum: Coated Ambassador
Tom Batters: Coated Ambassador
Tom Bottoms: Clear Ambassador



WILL CALHOUN
Snare Drum: Smooth White Falam
Bass Drum: Clear PinStripe
Tom Batters: Clear PinStripe
Tom Bottoms: Clear Ambassador



BILLY COBHAM
Snare Drum: Coated Ambassador
Bass Drum: Clear PinStripe
Tom Batters: Coated Ambassador
Tom Bottoms: Clear Dip/Clear Amb.



ZACH DANZIGER
Snare Drum: Coated Ambassador
Bass Drum: Clear PinStripe
Tom Batters: Clear PinStripe
Tom Bottoms: Clear Ambassador



DOM FAMULARO
Snare Drum: Coated PowerStroke
Bass Drum: Clear PinStripe
Tom Batters: Coated PinStripe
Tom Bottoms: Clear Ambassador



ANTON FIG
Snare Drum: Coated CS/Black Dot Under
Bass Drum: Clear Emperor
Tom Batters: Clear Ambassador
Tom Bottoms: Clear Diplomat



PAUL GEARY
Snare Drum: Coated Emperor
Bass Drum: Clear CS Black Dot
Tom Batters: Coated Ambassador
Tom Bottoms: Clear Diplomat



WILLIE GREEN
Snare Drum: Clear CS Black Dot
Bass Drum: Clear PinStripe
Tom Batters: Clear PinStripe
Tom Bottoms: Clear Diplomat



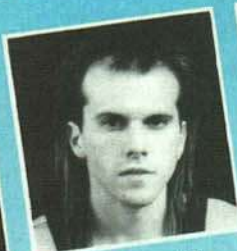
MYRON GROMBACHER
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Bass Drum: Clear PinStripe
Tom Batters: Coated Ambassador
Tom Bottoms: Coated Ambassador



OMAR HAKIM
Snare Dr: Coated CS/Black Dot Under
Bass Drum: Clear PinStripe
Tom Batters: Clear Ambassador
Tom Bottoms: Chrome Starfire Ambass



SIMON PHILLIPS
Snare Dr: Coated CS/Black Dot Under
Bass Drum: Clear Ambassador
Tom Batters: Clear Ambassador
Tom Bottoms: Clear Ambassador



VAN ROMAINE
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Bass Drum: Clear Emperor
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DB: I met a marvelous writer by the name of Gordon Brisker. He had his own band and also did a lot of contracting for other things, which is how I got to work with people like Anita O'Day and Jerry Hey. I had reached a plateau on the writing stuff and said, "Okay, now it's time to get back into some playing."

RF: So you *did* miss playing?

DB: I'm trying to say this without sounding egotistical: I do enjoy playing, but I enjoy playing with a certain caliber of musician and in certain situations. You have to weigh what you get out of something. Instead of playing a wedding for people who aren't really paying attention to the band and getting paid \$50 for a four-hour date, I would rather write an article that paid \$100 and that would be read by thousands of people. It would still be utilizing my creativity. I would rather devote my time to writing a book or a composition—unless it's an album date or a real fun jazz gig.

RF: What instruments do you write for?

DB: My field of writing is for stage band, so the instrumentation is basically five saxes, four trumpets, four trombones, and a rhythm section.

RF: When you write for that kind of instrumentation, how extensively do you have to know those instruments?

DB: I don't know how to play all of them, but I know their

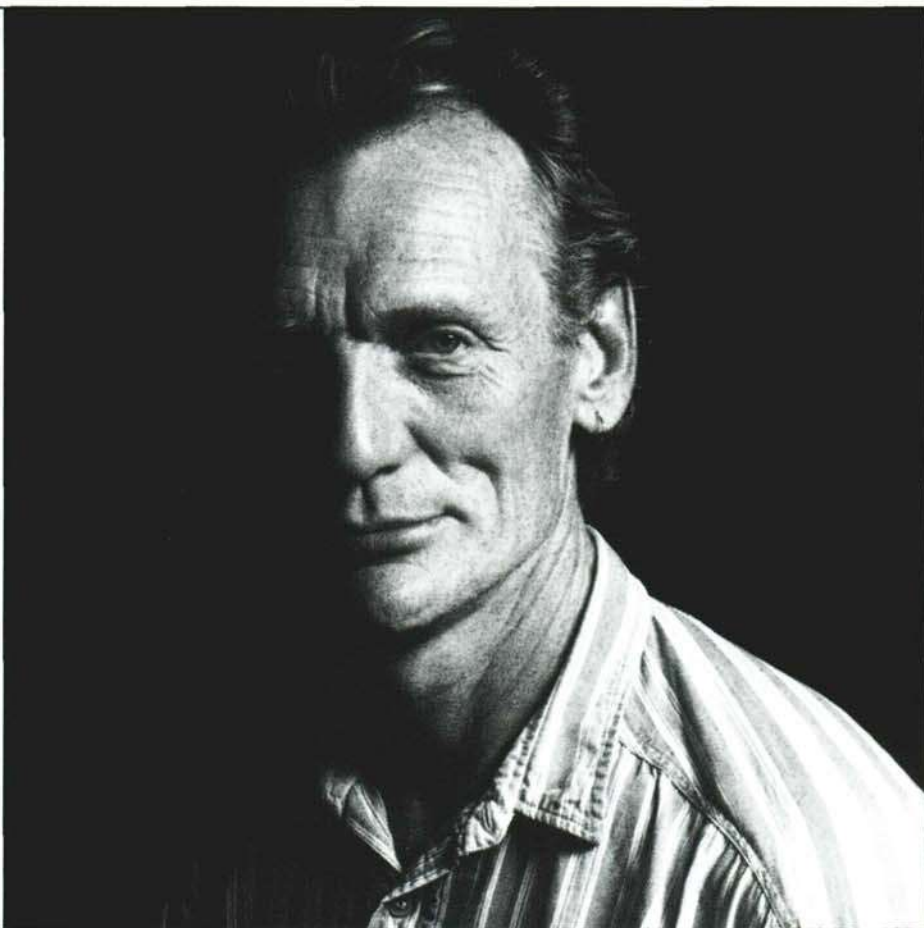
characteristics, their ranges, and their breaking points—where certain notes or passages are difficult to play. It's a lot of fun and I think it has helped me to become a better musician. When I play a chart now, I appreciate how what I play on the drums affects everything else and how everything comes together to make the tune happen.

RF: Can you explain a bit about the workings of composition writing—how a work gets published and what the financial possibilities are?

DB: Some pieces are commissioned by a specific junior high, high school, or college group. Perhaps they have an exceptional alto or trumpet player they'd like to feature, so they hire me to write something that would feature that particular player.

Because I am under contract to a certain publishing company and have been writing for publication for the last ten years, I automatically write two or three things for them every single year. I, or Louie and I, write the composition, and then we get a 10% royalty on every copy that's sold. The tunes are published, and then promotional albums of the tunes—along with what they call a score brochure, which is a short blurb about the composition—will be mailed out to 35,000 band directors around the world. Then, hopefully, those directors will order it for their spring program or whatever.

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RF: If someone were interested in doing this, how would they get started?

DB: There are a lot of universities with classes in arranging and orchestration. I did a lot of that at Northridge. If I had an idea for a combination of instruments that I wanted to hear, I would write out those four bars and take it into a jazz band and have them run it down so I could hear what it sounded like.

There are also arranging books: Don Sebesky has one, Sammy Nestico is coming out with one, and Dick Grove has one. There are a lot of private instructors that teach composition. For me, most of it just stems from listening to everything I can get my hands on. That is the best way to learn. I still buy records constantly—Latin, pop, classical, all kinds—to see how different people orchestrate things.

RF: What have been some of your highlights?

DB: There have been so many. The first tune I had published...the first book I had published...the first major album I did. Playing the opening ceremonies of the Olympic games was a wonderful experience. It was just marvelous to walk out in front of 200,000 people and know that another 200 million or so were watching. It was tremendous being able to hang out with some of those athletes before the games had even started. Within the course of the next two weeks, some of those people

became international celebrities.

Recently, the two Grammy nominations were thrilling because that's something you always look at as a kid as something you want to be a part of. You never know whether you're going to get that opportunity or not. That was a tremendous thrill.

Writing-wise, Louie's *Airmail Special* got the Grammy nomination this year. I wrote a tune called "In Roy's Corner" with Louie and Sammy Nestico. Sammy is one of the biggest all-time writers there is; Basie's sound has been attributed to him. He has published over 700 compositions for young bands; one of his charts was the first chart I ever played in junior high school. To be able to co-write a tune with the undisputed king of writers and arrangers and the undisputed king of drums was a thrill I can't even put into words.

I think one thing I enjoy now more than anything else is working with younger people. Since I've gotten over some of the insecurities of the business and have been able to do some things, I enjoy being able to put back into the system what I took out, even if it's just talking to young people and trying to keep them motivated to continue doing what they want to do.

RF: With all of your accomplishments, what other goals do you have in the music business?

DB: I've driven myself pretty hard to get some of the things that I've wanted. One of my insecurities has been whether or not I would ever get to do those things, so I wanted to work hard to make sure that I did. But I also wanted to do it at a young enough age to enjoy it. It was kind of sad for me when Henry Fonda got his Oscar at 70-some years of age and then died two months later. He had worked a lifetime for that and didn't have time to enjoy it. I've tried to push myself, and I don't regret that, because I've gotten some things under my belt and can therefore relax.

But at 32, I'm now trying to see what other directions I would like to go into. What I've talked about doing for the last couple of years is starting a non-profit organization for musicians and entertainers who are having a difficult time getting started or who become discouraged. It would be like a job-placement service where people can come in and get ideas about what they can do in the business. Some people have this terrible misconception that if you're going to be in music, you're either going to play or you're not. I don't think they realize there are a lot of other options open to them in music.

Of course, I want to continue doing what I'm doing now, but I'd like to expand. From a compositional standpoint, I'd like to start writing for strings. I'd like to get into TV and movie writing. As a player, there are a lot of people I'd love to work with, like Tony Bennett and the Manhattan Transfer. I'd like to do some work in the pop field and I'd like to do some producing. I'd like to keep busy and keep growing.

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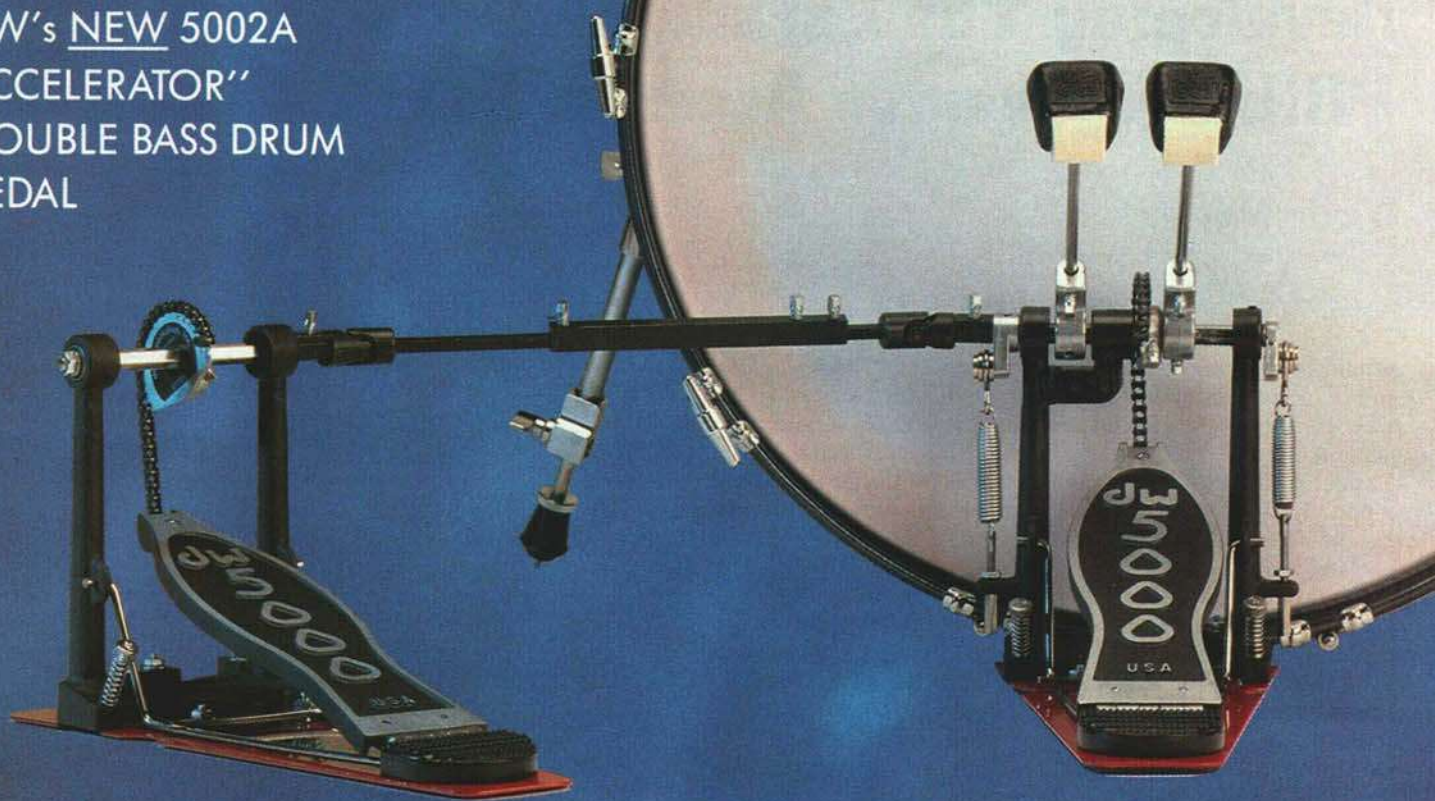
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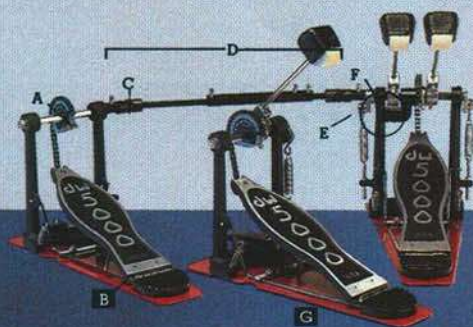
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Developing The Paradiddle With Progressive Accents: Part 2



Photo by Rick Mattingly

by Joe Morello

Transcribed by Keith Necessary

This three-part series of articles will help you develop control of placing accents anywhere in any combination in single, double, and triple paradiddles. This month we'll start by moving the accents over a triple paradiddle. Accent only the first note, then just the second, then the third, then the fourth, and so on. Practicing in this manner gives you total control of single and especially double strokes. By mastering this exercise you will also be able to accent the third note and still make the fourth note softer.

Continuing on, you'll get to a group of exercises involving progressive accents. First try accenting the first note, then the first and second, then the first, second, and third, and so on.

Be sure to use a metronome with all these exercises, and start slowly (at about quarter note = 60). (One of my students, Matty Montalbano, can play these exercises at quarter note = 220.) Once you can comfortably play the exercises, try mixing them up to suit your needs. Remember to pay close attention to the stickings. Also, when practicing them at the drumset, play four on the bass drum and 2 and 4 on the hi-hat. Remember, the idea of these exercises is to be able to accent anywhere in the bar you want, over any pattern.

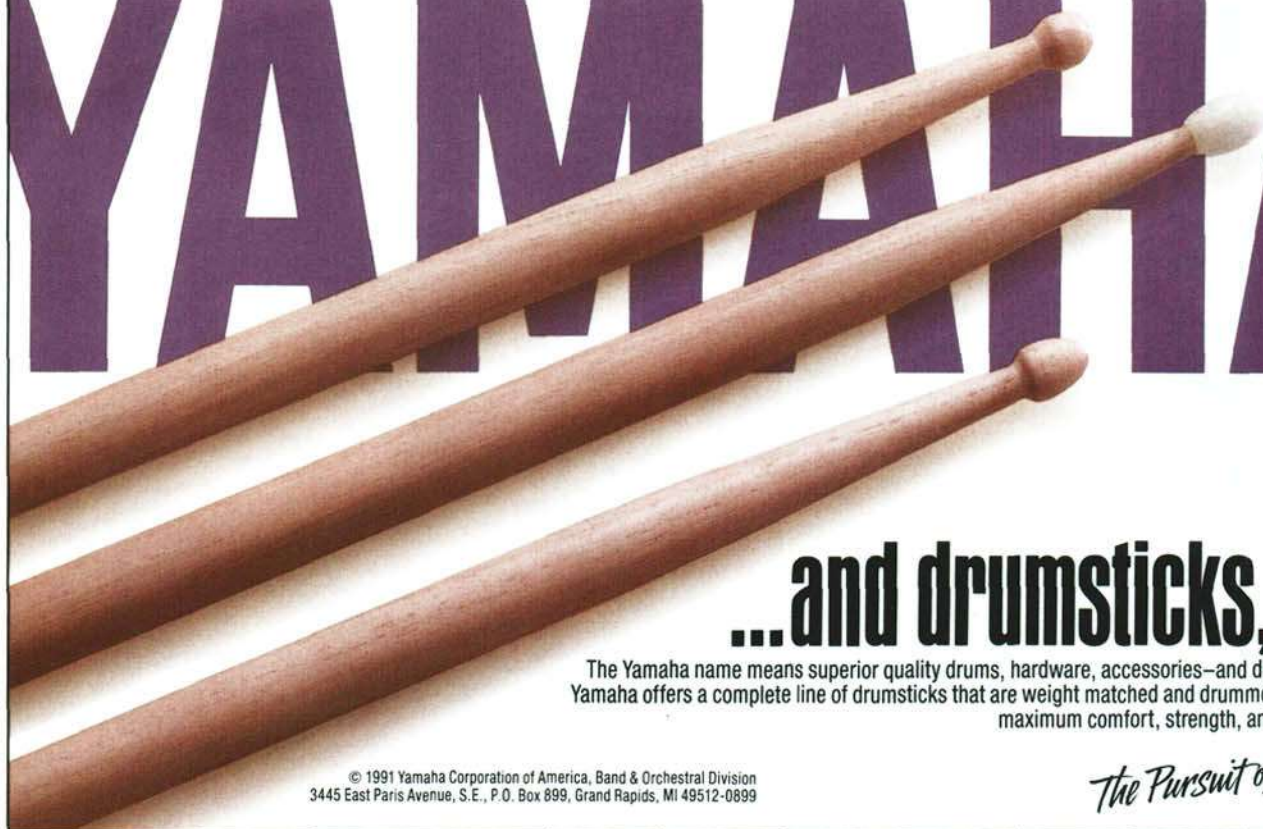




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Practical Applications Of The Mozambique Rhythm: Part 2



by Chuck Silverman



In Part 1 of this series (Sept. '91 *MD*) we started our investigation of the mozambique rhythm. We looked at what the typical mozambique applied to the drumset sounds like, and we also tried a few more contemporary ideas based upon that idea.

I'd like to continue the study this month in much the same way.

There's a certain way of playing mozambique that uses accents on the cowbell. In a typical situation, this is primarily the job of the bongocero (bongo player). Steve Gadd is one of the great exponents of this application to the drumset.

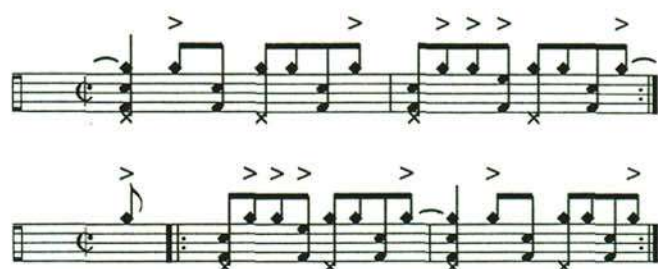
Our first two musical examples apply the accented pattern to a cowbell or cymbal. The accents on the cowbell can be played on the mouth of the bell, with the other notes played on the body. If played on a cymbal, place the accents on the bell and the other notes on the cymbal proper.

Once again, independence is a major challenge in these exercises. This is one of the reasons we're keeping things relatively basic here, notably the bass drum patterns. Concentrate on the groove of the patterns. The first two examples find the bass drum playing downbeats.



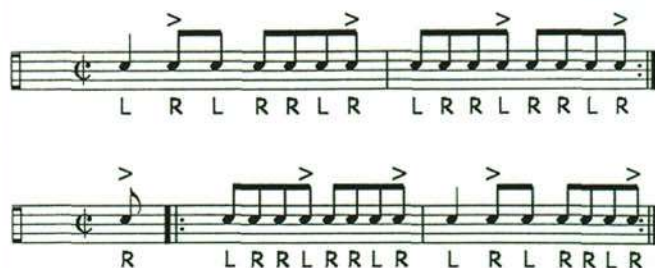
Allow me to repeat something you've no doubt heard time and again in your studies: *Slow down and take your time!* These rhythms will enhance your control of the drumset, but only if you give your body and mind the necessary time to coordinate their efforts.

Now here's another bass drum pattern added to the hand patterns and hi-hat.

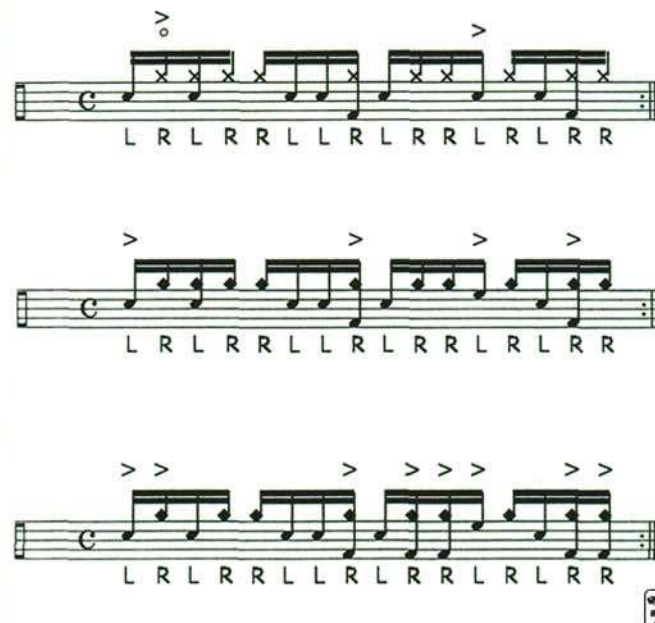


Combining the patterns being played by both hands on one surface yields a distinctive hand pattern that can be used in many effective ways: as an exercise or warm-up, a generator of fill and solo ideas, or just an easy way to remember the patterns we've been working on. If all your brain has to remember is one hand pattern, then it makes the performing process that much easier.

Here is the hand pattern, first in the 2/3 (reverse) clave, then in the 3/2 (forward) clave. Practice at first with both feet playing downbeats. Follow this with the other bass drum pattern presented in this article. After some work, you may want to start throwing the accents around the kit. (There are some very hip groove ideas lying within this pattern.)



Here's a more contemporary-sounding groove idea that I've developed with the help of *thefeel* of mozambique.



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Making It

■ by Doug Dimmel

What's your idea of "making it"? Is it having a drum tech, endorsements, playing on recording sessions, appearing on national television? When I started playing drums at the age of 10 those are the lines along which my mind ran—and, of course, making some money. Well, in the past two years, while playing on the Barbara Mandrell team, I have realized all of my childhood dreams.

I've heard people say, "He's a great player," and, "He's paid his dues," and, "He's got a unique style." The best one is, "Boy, did he ever luck out!" I hope all of those things are true. However, I'd like to address some points you might not have thought about. To begin with: Do you practice? Do you know how to get good, solid drum sounds? Can you read charts? Do you have a working knowledge of the electronic side of drumming? Having these tools of your trade sharp is as important as a carpenter knowing which saw to use.

I played the drums for years before I took drum lessons. But when I did have university instructors, they were the best, and I listened carefully to all they had to tell me. Being self-taught may have a few advantages, but there are a lot of dues to be paid that way.

My instructors in college were complimentary. Compliments are heartwarming and good to hear, but (red flag!) don't let them inflate your ego. I live in a town where there are literally dozens of great drummers who have all been told the same thing.

I had my own traveling band for 17 years—from the time I was a kid. We played all over the U.S., Canada, Europe, and several countries in the Pacific. I also had studio experience and jingle work. From all this I was able to compile good audio and video cassettes.

After I quit traveling, I settled in Kansas City, got married, and had two children. In order to support them, I put together a good resume, which—along with my picture and cassettes—I mailed to every group for whom I could get an address. After weeks went by I got one response: "We're not looking right now."

About that time, I met a Nashville drummer who said, "Why would anyone in Nashville hire a guy from Kansas City when they have plenty of good drummers in town?" Whoa! I was in my 30's and had a family. The idea of relocation posed some serious questions. Should my wife and I both move away from supportive families, a small house payment, and a congenial neighborhood to start over in a town where we didn't know anyone? My wife said she was totally behind whatever decision I made. So, with her consent, I decided I'd rather try and fail than not try at

all. I considered LA, but felt more strongly that Nashville was my destiny.

So five years ago we sold our home, cashed in everything so we would have something to fall back on, and moved to Nashville. I immediately hit Music Row with cards and tapes. To say that doors did not fly open for me is to put it mildly. My first small opportunities came from relationships with other musicians. As I met players they all seemed to say the same thing. "Give it three years." For me, it took three and a half.

My next sentence is the "big one." If you don't remember anything else I have said, then do remember this: I got a regular job! I watered lawns on a miniature golf course from midnight to 8:00 a.m. during a dry spell, and also took a valet car-parking job at Opryland Hotel. It paid \$2.40 an hour plus tips, and came with health insurance for my family.

On my first day on the job one of the doormen—who was about ten years younger than I was—yelled at me to "Get the broom and sweep up those cigarette butts!" Wait a minute! Who did this kid think he was? I was a college grad. I didn't come to Nashville for this! However, that incident was possibly the best training that I have ever had in how to get on in life. It dawned on me that that "kid" was the boss. I had to sweep that curb as if it were the only job I'd ever have. It's funny to tell it now, but I

actually got to where I liked it. And guess what? I was promoted to doorman. That was sort of a breakthrough for me; I was learning the keys to promotion!

The lesson is this: What was I there for—to serve, or to be served? Was I willing to do what it took to please the boss? Only with this attitude is promotion possible. Do you call this "kissing up"? If you do, then you have yet to learn what I am talking about.

That's the way I held my job at Opryland Hotel. But let's get back to musicians. I've seen a great player refuse to play the way the bandleader wanted him to, and "where is he working

tonight?" The word "flexible" should be written on your forehead. The drummer actually kicks off and leads the band, but if you aren't willing to serve others now, you'll never be promoted to a leadership role. No leader who isn't willing to serve his people is tolerated for long.

You must be a person of integrity. Are you trustworthy? No person who isn't can hold a position of responsibility for long. How do you talk about your boss? Are you a complainer or a

"The word
'flexible'
should
be written
on your
forehead."



backbiter? What you put out will come back to you. Are you punctual? If you think being late is cool, then you might as well plan on gigging on some of that Florida swampland.

The businessman to whom you must turn to for a job has the principle of "Never grant authority where it's being sought, but grant it where the person is looking for responsibility." Offer to go the extra mile. Be a blessing to whomever your boss is.

If all of your friends have told you what a great musician you are, it's natural not to want to be a burger flipper or a valet parker. You probably feel that stardom and the bright lights are what you deserve. Hang on to that dream, because without dreams we're dead. But at the same time, realize that we live in a practical world. Recognize that you have to support yourself while working on your dream. Whatever you do to support yourself, give it your best shot. Then if you get that "gig of a lifetime," you'll have the character to keep the job. Haven't you known guys who didn't stay in a group long? Nobody liked them. They were hard to get along with and thought that they were God's gift to the world of music. Unless people like that see the light and become more flexible, their big break won't last long. Be diligent with the gift that you have. Some of the most successful players today were not the most gifted, but they were the most dedicated.

One other thing I should mention is the fact that a lot of drummers went to Nashville thinking that they could support themselves by gigging in the clubs. But the club owners there know that there are musicians begging to play. I could have made twice as much at home in almost any club. It's even worse in LA. In the major rock 'n' roll clubs there, you have to pay *them* to get to play.

I auditioned for many artists before Barbara Mandrell, and I worked part-time with a couple of good groups. I found that it's very important to do as much research as possible. Find out what to wear and how to look. I remember one time I had what I thought was a great audition. I knew the charts, and everyone was smiling...but I was told that I didn't look "rock 'n' roll enough."

I heard about a fellow who didn't get a gig because he brought his wife to the audition for a traveling job. If you can't stand to be parted from your wife even for an audition, what is she going to do if you travel?

If you are auditioning for a production show, like those in theme parks, you'd better be a good reader. However, I once took my chart in with me—which was carefully worked out with very intricate rhythms—thinking this would impress them. I was mistaken. My taking the chart in this case gave the band the impression that I hadn't worked long enough to learn the tunes, and all that time I spent on the songs was wasted. They wanted me to show them that I felt the simplicity of the groove.

Before auditioning for any group or artist, learn the songs they do like the back of your hand. That will let them know that

you could make the transition easily. When I was preparing to audition for Barbara Mandrell, I was lucky enough to be able to call her previous drummer if I wasn't sure of something on her tape. (I also didn't wear drum gloves to the audition because I thought she might think I looked *too* "rock 'n' roll.")

Well, I guess you know I got the job. However, I was still on trial for about a year. Randy Wright, who had been Barbara's drummer for about 12 years, was a tough act to follow. Barbara trusted him implicitly, and my timing, my feel for her music, my attitude, and my knowledge of country music were all questioned during the first year. Happily, the character traits that I had developed over the years—and that were refined on the curb of Opryland Hotel—drove me to suck in any remaining defiant ego and resolve that "Whatever it takes, I'm going to please her."

All you good drummers out there know what it takes to put on the show in the way of timing, feeling, and great sounds. But, in a business full of great drummers, don't overlook that attitude you have. Always ask yourself the main question: "Am I here to get service, or to give it?"



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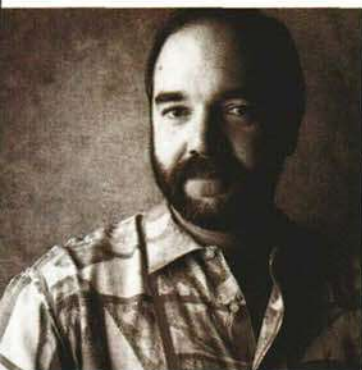
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PETER ERSKINE

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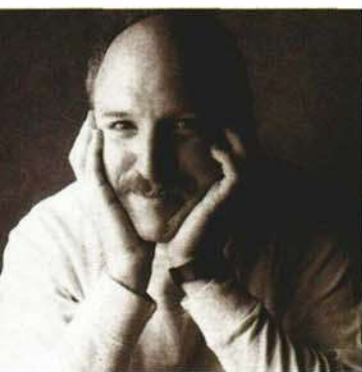
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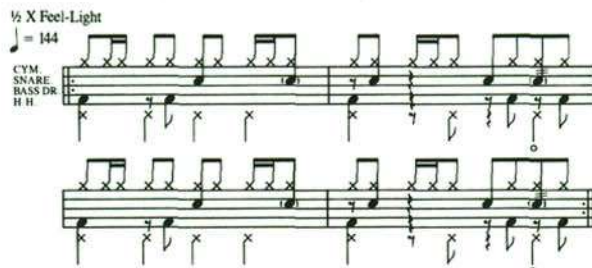
planet searching for old



ADAM NUSSBAUM

Ks anymore? Well, us being us, we decided to try. And,

as our three friends above will attest, we've nailed



The song "Lifescape" from the next Elektric Band Album features this Weckl/Pre-Aged K workout.

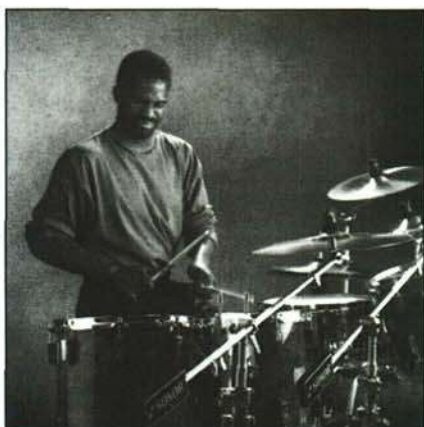
AND VERY EXPENSIVE.

pre-stress and work the metal at a crucial stage in the manufacturing process. That, together with a new combination of hand-hammering processes, produced a cymbal with an aged tonality. According to Adam Nussbaum, "With the Pre-Aged K, I get the airy sound I want. When you accent on it, the cymbal opens up quickly, then closes down quickly, sort of like the little white peaks on a wave. This way, you're not overwhelmed with overtones. Which is important to me, because a jazz drummer never wants a sound that's too busy or obnoxious." Peter Erskine feels, "It's extraordinarily close to the old Turkish sound and I've never heard whole notes sound so good. It's not just a percussive thing, either. I liken the cymbal to a piano or violin: it has the clarity and the rich, creamy tone



of a real instrument. The subtleties are wonderful; when you tap the cymbal, it has a 'give,' a response to it. It's not like other cymbals that feel like you're just hitting metal." Dave Weckl adds, "With the new Pre-Aged K, I have a cymbal that gives me more spread and body, without sacrificing good stick definition. I really like the cymbal's 'voice.' It's not too harsh; it has a transparent pleasing sound. In terms of consistency, I think the Pre-Aged Ks are better than the old Ks. Because you have to go through a slew of old ones before you find a gem, while all the new Ks sound terrific." To sum up, we believe we've come up with something special in our Pre-Aged K Dry Light Rides. But then, when you think about it, if a cymbal maker that's been around since 1623 knows anything, it should know about aging.

Zildjian
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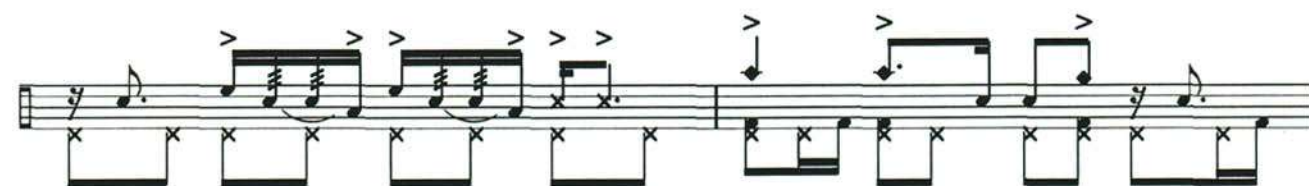
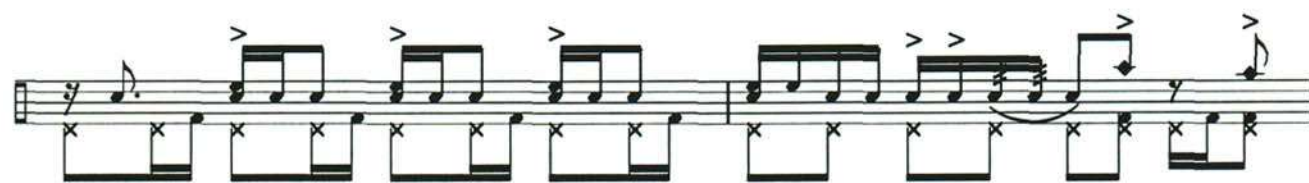
Will Kennedy: "Downtown"

■ Transcribed by John Knecht

Will Kennedy's style is amazingly fluid and smooth. Grace notes, accents, and odd-note placements dominate his snare and bass drum work. He tastefully fills the spaces created by many of the concise Yellowjacket melodies. This is especially true on "Downtown," where short, punctuated keyboard and sax hits leave open space for Will to add motion and color.

In the following 16-bar solo (which appears near the end of the tune), Will leads the groove at all times, while setting up many seemingly random band hits. These fills and hits intertwine in a technical beauty that has to be heard to be appreciated. Technical skill and good musical sense are qualities vital to any well-balanced drummer. As "Downtown" proves, these are skills that Will Kennedy has in his back pocket.

MUSIC KEY



continued from page 25

As far as other training I had, I was involved in a summer music program at UC Berkeley, where I started studying piano and learning a bit about theory. I got some better experiences playing with big bands, as well.

I also attended a junior college, under the instruction of Bill Bell, who's like my second father. There I was exposed to more theory and playing in small groups. Bill first exposed me to actually sitting down with a Count Basie record and analyzing what was going on. I got a lot

out of that. And we looked at what all the instruments were doing, as well as the drums. From then on I was basically on my own.

WFM: I guess at one point back then you must have done a lot of practicing.

WK: Do you want to know something? I didn't practice that much early on because I was lazy. I wasn't really thinking about the future. I think in my own mind I was serious about being a player, but I was enjoying it and having fun playing the drums. People were telling me I was sounding good, so I wasn't working

that hard at it. But I wasn't looking ten years down the line, which wasn't the smart thing to do.

I ended up getting it together more on the gig than by just practicing by myself. I did a lot of jamming with people and I learned more from those experiences at that point. I regret not having an organized practice schedule when I was coming up. Just a little bit every day would have made a lot of difference I'm sure. I probably would have gotten to the same place, but it would have been easier in the long run.

WFM: Have you learned your lesson? Do you practice regularly now?

WK: I don't always have the time to practice, but there are things I'm working on. Right now I'm pulling back on learning new concepts and concentrating on developing what I have. I think my Latin chops have come a long way. But there are still some things that I don't thoroughly understand.

There's a thing I talk about in my clinics in regard to Latin music that I call "the egg factor." It's basically just delayed notes, where, in a pattern of notes, there's this automatic thing that good Latin players have where they stretch the time a bit, like an egg rolling down a hill. I want to get that completely together to where I can play the spirit of what's happening and not just the notes.

Another concept I've been working on is becoming more comfortable with playing "out." I feel like I've gotten good at it, but I'm not satisfied. When you hear people like Vinnie or Tony take it out and come back in, that's inspiring. I want to get that comfortable and confident with it that I can just go out there and have no fear. What's been helping me develop it is something that I talked about earlier, polyrhythms.

The main thing I'm always looking to add to my playing is the "slightly different." I like to take standard beats or fills and make them my own. Then I bring those ideas to the Yellowjackets, because that's what the band is about, expanding and doing things our own way. That's one of the things I love about this band—it gives me the opportunity to be creative and express that side of my playing.

To give you an example of this type of thing, there's a tune called "Freedom-land" on our most recent album, *Green-*

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house. The groove sounds familiar, but not quite. It's almost a song, but it's different. I heard a great French drummer from a band called Ultra Marine, and he and I got to talking, exchanging ideas. He showed me this cool beat, which I embellished on, and it worked perfectly for "Freedomland." I have to call him and thank him!

WFM: I'd like to go back a bit and talk about when you first joined the Yellowjackets. Did you have any weaknesses that needed improving right away?

WK: At that point in my playing it wasn't anything I had to go home and work on. The interesting thing about joining the Yellowjackets was that it was a turning point for the band in terms of the musical direction of the group, not solely because of me. The band was leaning more to an open, jazzier sound, which I think my playing is more directed toward. So it was me being in the right place at the right time stylistically. I was the first one to audition, and I got the gig because it just felt good. So with that element it was more of us coming together and growing together. It wasn't that I was joining a band and having to make adjustments in my playing. The band was looking for someone who was leaning in a direction I was already heading in.

Previously the band was doing more of an instrumental funk-type thing, and they had to keep an element of that in the music, but they also wanted to keep expanding. We tried to make the transition painless for the listeners, so we kept a few backbeat tunes on that first record I did. But you don't hear any on *Greenhouse*.

WFM: There are some specific items in your playing that I'd like to cover. You play ride rhythms with your left hand on a right-handed kit. Why's that?

WK: First off, I must say that being in the Yellowjackets has completely changed and improved my ride cymbal technique. That was something that needed to be developed more. The 'Jackets over the years have gotten into playing some upper-stratosphere swing tempos—I *mean fast!* [laughs] I've had to hone my technique, and I've found that by using my fingers more and concentrating on staying relaxed, I can play up there. And of course those up numbers

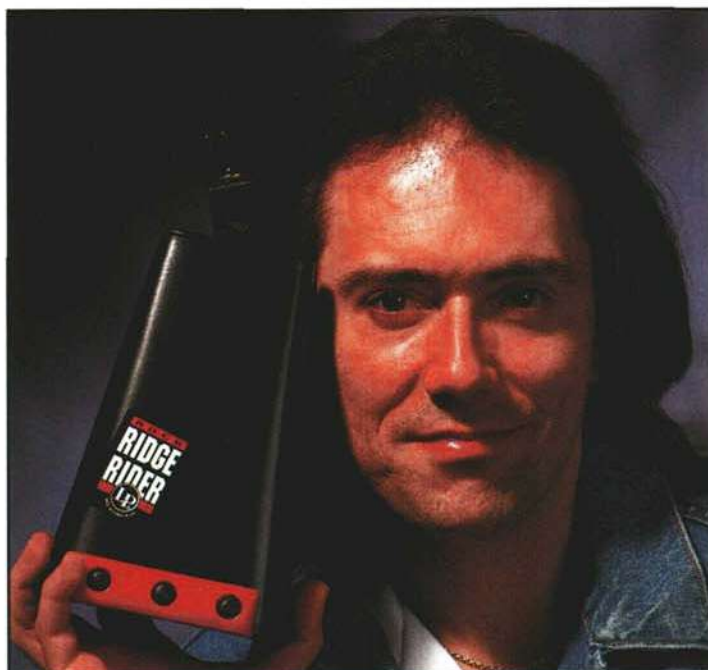
are always nice and long. In fact, we've been playing a song of ours called "Out Of Town" that is way up there, and I have to play the head, then play behind two soloists, and *then* take a solo myself and still have enough chops to say something!

As far as how the left-hand lead came about, I'm left-handed, but I'm right-footed, [laughs] When I was coming up, there was a beat that I just had to play. It was from James Brown's "Cold Sweat." When I played it the "correct" way, I

couldn't get that groove to sound good. By accident I tried it leading with the left hand, and all of a sudden everything seemed so much more natural, and that beat grooved. So I moved the ride cymbal over there and it's been there ever since.

WFM: Would you recommend that other players try leading with their left hand?

WK: Yes. I wish that I had been open-minded enough when I was younger to develop the right side anyway. I was so against it because people were telling me I couldn't lead with my left. Now that you



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mention it, it's making me think that maybe I should spend some time working on playing the other way. Not so much to improve the technique in my right hand, but to challenge my brain.

WFM: Something else that's a little bit uncommon about your approach is that you use a rather uncomplicated setup. That's kind of rare these days. I mean, no double pedal, no second hi-hat, only a few toms—how can you possibly play?

WK: No kidding! I'll tell you, when I first got the gig with the Yellowjackets, I had a pretty big kit. I said to myself, "Cool, I've got the Yellowjackets gig, time to go and do it up!" [laughs] I had an array of drums and cymbals, all sorts of electronics, including a sampler—just a big kit. And one day it just hit me, "I don't need all of this."

I often go through phases of rearranging my setup. I go about eight to ten months and make some sort of minor change. I did make a major change last year, and I'm now using Sonor drums, which I'm very happy with. The most recent setup is just a basic kit with a single rack tom and two floor toms. I'm using a main snare and one of Sonor's

Soprano snares as a secondary drum. But that's it. Overall it's more challenging for me to get the same amount of sounds I got on the big kit on a small one. That's my goal in having a small kit: to be able to say something with less.

WFM: Do you find that you're trying to get more than one sound out of a particular instrument? For example, on *Greenhouse*, you get so many different shadings off of the snare drum, and it's very effective.

WK: Yes, that's it. There's all these little nuances that can be developed in your playing that add to the groove and the feel of what you're playing. I'm not saying you can't do that on a big kit, but it just seems to me that I've found a smaller kit to be more conducive to me being more creative.

I've found that even the sizes of the drums, the sounds they produce, and how they affect the setup have a lot to do with my creativity. My largest tom is a 14", which is pretty small by today's standards. But right now I'm digging the fact that I can tune it way down and get a certain feel off of the drum.

WFM: Speaking of tuning, do you have a

way you go about tuning your drums so as to get the maximum out of a small kit?

WK: No matter what room you're in, each one has a tonal center. Every enclosure has this. Of course a drum is an enclosure. There's a note that the drumshell has that the drum should be tuned near, and so I've found through a lot of experimenting how to listen for that sound. So then when I tune a drum, I place the head on the drum and carefully raise the tension until the ruffle is off the head. Then, while I'm holding one hand on the middle of the head, I fine-tune the head, evenly tensioning the drum all around. I've found that the natural tone of the drum is normally right around that point—not tensioned too high.

WFM: Do you find that you go through a lot of heads with them tuned, from what I think you're saying, rather loosely?

WK: Well, because of the size of the drums—10", 12", and 14"—that natural tone is fairly high, so the pitch range is really nice, at least for me. It doesn't seem low. As far as the heads wearing out faster, I like to dig into the toms when it's musical, and also play them

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lightly when that's called for. I'm not pounding into the drums all the time. Besides, I like the way the heads feel at that tension.

WFM: I'd like to get your thoughts on your sound. If someone were listening to you, what sound characteristics would you like them to pick up on?

WK: I'd like the listener to get a feeling of warmth from my sound, but not to the extent of everything sounding dark. I use Paiste cymbals, and they're known for their brightness. I'm very attracted to that crisp, splashy sound. But at the same time, the way that I hit the cymbals, the way that I caress the drumkit, I want to have that element of fire along with that element of warmth. I want it to be a pleasant noise.

Within that "warmth" framework I want to be able to touch on different musical colors. If I want to be brassy, or abrasive, I want to have the control over my sound to be able to apply that in a song. But I also enjoy playing very softly, almost *implying* more than actually playing the notes. Dynamics are extremely important to me, and how I shape certain phrases, and choose which notes I stress and which ones I lay back on—these are things I want the listener to hear in my playing. To me, every groove, every song has its own heartbeat, and as a drummer it's extremely important to home in on what that is and somehow get it across to the audience.

WFM: A writer/drummer friend of mine told me he thought your cymbal playing and touch are fantastic—very innovative—and I agree. What are your thoughts on cymbals, including selection, sizes, etc.?

WK: As with my drums, my cymbals are generally a bit smaller than most guys are using. I go back and forth between either a 19" or an 18" ride, which is almost unheard of these days. But cymbals to me are the colors, and with cymbals there are so many ways of getting different sounds out of them. I think it's really important for drummers to think about that. Take a look at the cymbals you have and find out how many different sounds you can get out of them. Try different stick positions, hitting the cymbals on the edge, and play them all over the surface, from the edge to the bell, and be sensitive to a musical section you

can apply those differences to. It's really important to become familiar with what your cymbals are capable of doing, and I've made a study of it. Just like I have fewer drums, I have fewer cymbals because I can get a lot of different sounds out of each. At the moment I'm using just a pair of hi-hats, a regular ride, a flat ride, two crashes, and a mellow China.

WFM: You just mentioned you like Paiste cymbals because of their high-end qualities, and I notice you use nylon-

tipped sticks as well. Is that for the same reason?

WK: Actually, the reason I use nylon tips is because I don't like the way wood tips wear. I've played wood-tipped sticks that sound good on my cymbals, but they just wear funny. I like the consistency of nylon.

WFM: Something else unique about your approach is how high you sit. You're up there.

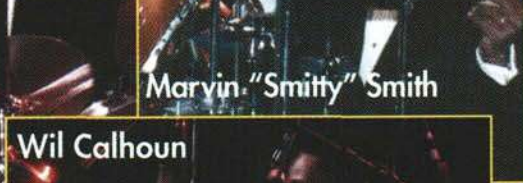
WK: I guess compared to most people I do sit high. I do it because it gives me

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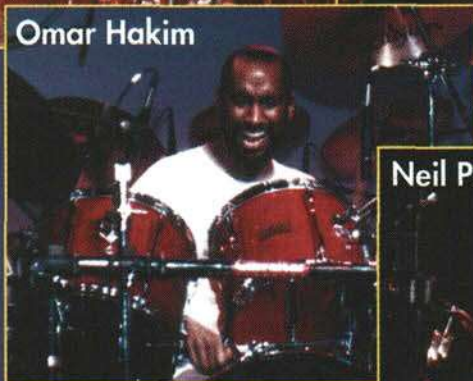
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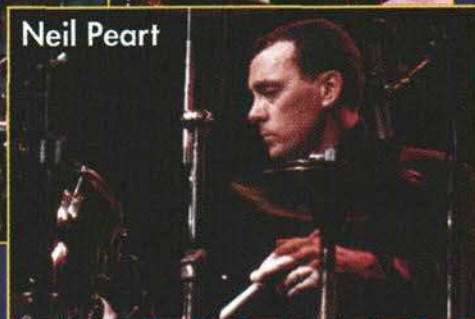
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the ability to be on top of the drums and cymbals. I feel most comfortable with everything below me. I keep my cymbals relatively low and flat as well. That probably gives the impression that I'm sitting even higher than I actually am. I've found that by sitting higher, everything comes in a bit closer, so I don't have to reach for things.

WFM: I'm sure most drummers have experimented with their seat height, and I know that when I sat high I loved the way I could reach things, but the balance seemed awkward.

WK: I've never had a balance problem. Plus I especially like the angle my legs are at when I sit the way I do. It seems very comfortable, but it's been something I've evolved into over a period of time. I think any radical change, like positioning a seat much higher than you're used to, just won't seem natural. The best way to get used to it is to do it gradually.

WFM: Along the same lines as seat height, another thing that I admire about your approach is your excellent posture at the kit. You don't crouch at all.

WK: I don't remember how I started

doing that, but I feel it's important to have good posture. If you're hunched over and trying to play, you're wasting energy, so I think it's important. I've sat the way I do for a while now so it's natural to me and I don't have to think about it, but even when you're standing or sitting away from the kit, good posture is important. Also, I think that by sitting with your back straight you increase your chances of being able to play for a lot of years.

WFM: Staying on that subject, in what direction would you like to see your playing go in, let's say, five years?

WK: I've actually been thinking about this because I feel it's important to have long-range goals for your playing. I mentioned this a little bit earlier: I'd like to be able to play with the same intensity that I play with now, but not have to work as hard.

That actually relates to an experience I had at the Koblenz Drummers' Meeting. I had a chance to hang with Steve Smith, Dave Weckl, and Dave Garibaldi, and they got me thinking about some things. Compared to my upbringing and my approach to drumming, theirs is a bit more technical, in terms of having serious formal lessons and study—*much* more intense than my own. That's why I consider myself more of a street player. In talking to them, they made me realize that you can play with fire and emotion and not have to sweat as hard. I want to give off the same intensity, but have less wear and tear on my body. That's what I'm reaching for at this point. That's a long-term goal of mine.

WFM: I'd like to switch gears a little bit and get your thoughts on the most recent Yellowjackets release, *Greenhouse*. How is this album different from past Yellowjackets albums, both musically and drum-wise?

WK: With every new record we do we try to expand on our sound. This time around we incorporated a 30-piece chamber orchestra, which really was a beautiful experience. Synths have come a long way in terms of sounding like strings, but when you stand in a room with real string players, there's nothing like it.

We laid the basic tracks, and the strings were overdubbed. What we were doing was trying to combine our jazz-based sound with elements of classical, and on the tunes that we used the strings, I had to adapt my playing to accommodate their parts. It required me to play strongly with-

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in the groove, and not stretch too far in terms of fills and taking it out. With a larger group of musicians, it's essential to keep that foundation.

The title cut is in 7/4. It required me to basically play a strong groove that all the players could follow. Since the song has elements of an African mood, I tried to visualize an African vibe as I played it—not overplaying, but giving it a strong musical heartbeat for the other musicians to lock in with.

WFM: You just mentioned visualization—is that something you do a lot when you're thinking about playing a particular tune?

WK: I think a lot of our music requires that. I have to get past the individual notes and think in terms of the emotions of the composition—get past the chops and get to the feel of the song. The dilemma that I'm faced with in the Yellowjackets is helping to create these songs and getting the proper emotions across on tape when we record. After we're out on the road awhile and have lived with these tunes, the songs evolve and I have a chance to really give them what they need to happen on that other level, other than just the notes. When we're recording, the challenge is to get to that point without having all that time of living with the compositions. That's my biggest challenge. It goes way beyond technique.

Another tune that has strings on it is "Freda," which is a traditional fiddle tune. That was unique because it's a combination of jazz and country & western, which is very different for me. I enjoyed trying to get into the spirit of the tune.

Another song we used strings on was "Indian Summer," which has a blowing jazz/Elvin Jones kind of feel to it. That was relatively easy to play. However, the thing that made it difficult was playing it to a click, which we had to do for the orchestra's sake. Man, that was a challenge for the whole band. We only realized we had to do that about five days before the session, and we were all like, "Oh no." [laughs] It actually worked out pretty well, but it was a bit scary going in.

Most of the tunes on the record have something interesting about them. "Seven Stars" has a 6/8 Nanigo feel to it. It's a quiet tune that really showcases the Paiste *Sound Creation Flatride I* used, and it recorded beautifully.

"Brown Zone" was a bop-influenced blowing tune with a quirky head that we just went in and did. It was only a couple of takes before we got one we liked. I enjoy that type of recording too, where you understand the spirit of the song and you just do it.

"Rain Dance" is one of my favorite tunes on the album. I'm playing the standard jazz pattern on the ride cymbal, but I'm doing kind of a half-time funk thing on the kick and snare. That groove was inspired by the bass line. It's an uptempo

tune that required some thought in terms of playing out and coming back. There are some 3/4 measures in there that form-wise keep it interesting. It's one that we play live and that's really fun to do.

WFM: What's the process of putting together an instrumental album with the Yellowjackets?

WK: First of all, it's a matter of having tunes that have strong melodies, and are influenced by many different cultures. That's something we're thinking about going into a new project. We look for

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things that will stretch us, because that's what being in this band is all about—growth.

WFM: Do you have a lot of input at that stage?

WK: Yes. That's been one of the beautiful things about being in this band. From day one I was involved. I co-write tunes and coproduce the records. I've been able to

have a say in our direction, plus I have total freedom in creating my own parts. It's a dream gig, and I'm very thankful to be involved in this organization. Plus the talent of these guys just goes without saying. I've learned so much, and I think we've all learned from each other.

WFM: Speaking of band members, Bob Mintzer replaced Marc Russo on this last

record. How has that change affected the group?

WK: When you change the lead voice in the band, it really changes how you support that voice. It's been another turning point for the band. Bob comes from even more of a traditional jazz background, and it's moved us into directions we've wanted to go. Bob's primary instrument is tenor sax, and Marc played more alto, so the sound changed. To me Bob has a bit warmer sound that, again, brings us closer to that traditional jazz sound. He really fits in with the direction the rest of the band is going.

WFM: On *Greenhouse*, and on a few of your other records, Alex Acuna guests on percussion. What does he add to the band?

WK: I call Alex our "ethnic consultant." On a lot of our tunes we write sequenced percussion tracks that we don't keep on the record, but we use as a sort of reference. Alex comes in and really brings an authenticity to the tracks. He's amazing in how he can almost instantly come up with parts that are just so perfect with what we're trying to say. He has instruments from all over the world, and he just adds that world-feel that we like to have in the music.

WFM: When the group performs live, how do you compensate for Alex not being there?

WK: Sequencers. Believe me, it's *not* the same, [laughs] But the band has become very comfortable with playing with the machines. I'll tell you, it's really an art

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being able to feel completely comfortable playing along with them and making something musical and expressive come out of that marriage.

WFM: It's become quite common for players to have to work with sequenced tracks live. Do you have any pointers for making it easier?

WK: This may seem trivial, but the key for me has just been being able to hear those tracks clearly. Find out what you have to do in order to hear that part, and do it. Also, a lot of guys will have just a straight click coming to them through their monitors, with the sequenced tracks going into the house only. I like to hear the sequenced materials and try to make them sound as musical as I can.

I have a direct feed from the sequencers to a small mixer that I have right next to me on stage. I plug a pair of *Walkman* headphones into it, and I only listen to one side of the phones, leaving the other just off my ear. I can get a comfortable level from my own mixer.

Our approach to sequencing involves making the sequencer an additional musician. I've never played to straight quarter notes—it's always been a part. To me that makes it more comfortable, actually playing with something that I can try to make some music with.

WFM: The Yellowjackets do a fair amount of touring. I was looking at your recent itinerary; you have what looks to be a rough schedule—play the gig, get on the bus, drive ten hours, and then do it all

over the next day. Your music is pretty demanding live, so isn't it difficult to play well *consistently* with that type of schedule?

WK: You know, it's really just the opposite of what you might think. The reason is because the gigs are just so much fun. I'm told that I'm smiling through the whole

set, and I don't even realize it. People tell me that I look like I'm having so much fun, and it's true. That really offsets the touring and all the difficulties that go along with this lifestyle. I really believe in our music, and when you've got that, everything else is secondary.



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The purpose of this department is to provide an avenue of communication directly between the consumers of drum and percussion equipment and those who design and manufacture that equipment. We invite all *MD* readers to respond to the questions presented; a representative selection of responses will be printed in a following issue.

July '91's question was:

Are you likely to choose equipment based on what your favorite artists endorse, or do you prefer to make your choice based on your own experimentation and experience?

I prefer to choose equipment based on my own experimentation and experience. I feel it is important for drummers to make an identity for themselves, and turning themselves into clones certainly won't help. Drummers should choose what best suits *their* needs, not what would suit the needs of their favorite artists.

Mark Kaefer
Basking Ridge NJ

I do like to choose the same equipment as my drumming idols, because I figure if it's good enough for them—and I like the sound—then it would be a good investment. It's definitely smarter to pay more for quality than to buy something and have it junk out. Also, it's cool to think that you are using the same equipment as your idol.

Chad Kendall
Plymouth IL

Knowing that my favorite artist uses a specific product might make me more likely to choose that product, but that isn't the only factor in making such a choice. I do like to experiment with different equipment, but it isn't always possible. So knowing who uses what and what it sounds like when they play it actually does help.

Sarah Comeau
Sabattus ME

When I was younger, I may have been inclined to play certain brands of drum equipment just because my favorite drummer used the same brands. But now that I'm older, more experienced, and (I hope) wiser about drumming, I know the kinds of sounds I want. In order to find those sounds, I need to play and experiment with as many products as possible and make decisions based on what sounds good to me.

Kevin Aiello
Ukiah CA

I prefer to use equipment based on what my favorite artists endorse because I am young (16) and somewhat uninformed about the world of drumming. I assume that these older drummers have had many experimental years and now use the best equipment they have come across. I use this to my advantage and am happy with my gear.

Ian Ferreira
Scarborough, Ontario, Canada

If I am going to shell out \$3,000 or more for a new drumkit, I'll be basing my decision on how good / believe the product is and how it fulfills *my* needs, not who else plays them. Let's not forget that the pros in the magazines are getting loads of money and free products for their endorsements! Perhaps it would be in the manufacturers' best interests to dispense with the bragging and groundless, conceited slogans. Tell us how your product is made, not who you paid to stand next to it! Drummers who are taken in by this sort of advertising deserve to get ripped off. I'll buy a drum when I think it's good enough, not when a wealthy hot shot says so.

Phillip Gullett
Lockport IL

Younger drummers who lack experience and who haven't had the opportunity to experiment with a variety of equipment might do well to talk to working drummers in their area. These drummers have to balance affordability, durability, and sound quality when purchasing equipment and accessories. As such, they can provide a less-experienced drummer with very candid and practical information.

John Perry Penn
Houma LA

I choose my equipment by personal experience or recommendations from a fellow drummer or teacher. These are people with whom I can actually carry on a conversation about the equipment I'm thinking of buying. However, I feel we would all be lying to ourselves if we didn't acknowledge at least some interest in what our favorite artists are playing. Hey, if I could afford everything my favorite drummer uses, I'd certainly value the fact that his equipment is set up night after night—proving that it is roadworthy.

Kevin Luke
Fairfax VA

I think a little of both is good. It seems senseless to buy a product based solely on the fact that your hero uses it. On the other hand, seeing and hearing what the "big boys" use—and hope-

fully getting their true opinions on it—can be beneficial. I put more weight on what an artist says in an interview than when their smiling face is next to the name of a product. Drum equipment is so personal (and expensive) that one needs to utilize all possible resources when making a purchase. Read up on the equipment you're interested in, talk to other drummers, and experiment in the drum shop. This has worked for me.

Steve Parmley
Pacific Grove CA

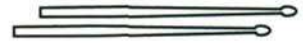


I know that Neil Peart, Alex Van Halen, and Joe Morello play Ludwig drums, Omar Hakim and Dennis Chambers play Pearl drums, and Phil Collins and Tony Williams play Gretsch drums. I know that these great players all play top-quality drums. I also know that I will not play or sound like any of them even if I play their brands.

On the other hand, I have yet to find a music store with top-of-the-line drums set up, tuned, and ready to play. Most stores claim that the drums are too expensive to have around for testing. Unfortunately, the guy behind the counter invariably tries to sell me the brand of drums he plays. I have no way of testing drumsets for comparison. I prefer to base my decisions on my

own experimentation and experience. However, the next best thing is a *Modern Drummer* product review.

Keith Stine
Pfafftown NC



This month's question pertains to the design of pro-level drum and cymbal stands, which currently tend to be very strong and durable, but also very heavy and expensive. In an effort to determine if this is what today's working drummers really require, our question is:

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Confidence Vs. Arrogance

by Roy Burns

Confidence is "belief in one's own abilities; a trust in oneself." Arrogance, on the other hand, is "being full of unwarranted pride and exaggerated self-importance." The key word in the description of arrogance is "unwarranted." In a sense this means "undeserved" or "unearned." In popular parlance, it is something like, "When you think you are hot and you are really not, you probably haven't paid your dues!"

We have all met drummers who are overbearing and arrogant. To hear some of these people talk you might think, "Wow, this person must be a monster player." But when this overbearing, arrogant drummer sits down to play, in nine out of ten instances the playing is usually pretty bad—if not downright terrible.

Drummers who are confident are honest with themselves. They know what they do well and what they don't do well. They also let their playing do the talking. An old expression regarding bragging goes, "It is better to remain quiet and be thought a fool than to open one's mouth and remove all doubt."

Talking just won't get it done! Hard work, self-discipline, experience, and objectivity are all requirements that you must meet in order to be a successful player. Be skeptical of people who tell you things like, "It was easy for me; I'm just a natural." I really don't buy this point of view, because undeveloped talent results in the same thing as no talent: nothing! Everyone, no matter how much talent they possess, must apply themselves to reach a high level of success. And it is usually tougher to stay at that level than it was to get there in the first place.

Do confident people ever get nervous? Sure they do—if they are honest about their feelings. David Lean, the great movie director, said, "All good actors are a little nervous before a new scene is to be filmed. Only the jerks are outwardly confident." Remember, confidence is the belief that you can do something if you are given a chance. It does not mean "acting important" before anything has been done.

Feeling a sense of pride after you have made a good record, played a good solo, or just had a good night is fine. However, it is best to review what you have accomplished, be proud of it, and move on. I know a drummer in his late 40's who is still talking about the drum contest he won at the age of 17. But you can't build a career on only one success; you need to have some staying power. You need to keep growing and improving—especially after a success—so that you don't become "stuck in time" like the person I mentioned.

Belief in your abilities is a great thing—but you can't fake it. If you act confident when you're not, it will show up immediately—especially when you're playing with good musicians. You can't just tell yourself, "I'm good," and expect to get good results. You have to work at it.

How do you know if you are confident or merely arrogant? Ask yourself the following questions. Do you spend a lot of time criticizing other drummers? Do you tell other people how good you are? Do you tell people that you are one of the best ever? Do you tell people that no one else is really that good?

If this sounds like you, I have a few suggestions. Number one, never tell anyone how good you think you are. If you really play well, people will tell you. Remember, confidence is based on preparation and experience, and both take time. Number two, don't tell other people that any famous drummer is no good. All famous drummers do something very well; that's usually how they become famous. Try to discover what that

thing is. In this way, you'll learn something instead of wasting your time criticizing.

How can we go about developing confidence? First, realize that drumming is just drumming; it's truly not the most important thing in the world. (The world has bigger problems.) Second, do your homework. Learn all you can about drumming while you're young. Study different styles, different drummers, and different types of music. This will give you a foundation on which to build your own style. Remember, preparation is part of confidence.

Here is my secret for developing confidence: Believe that you can always improve, no matter what your age or experience. If you can

continually improve, you give yourself the best chance to be successful. Besides, when you improve, you feel good about yourself. Feeling good about yourself helps you to continue to learn and improve. Let's face it! Improving is fun.

In order to improve, you must pay attention. When you are telling other people how good you think you are, you're missing a lot. Good drummers are good listeners—to what people say as well as to what they play.

If you can develop your belief in your ability to improve, you are on your way to developing true confidence.

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continued from page 29

the road with us from time to time to film what we are doing. There's a show called *YouthQuake*, which comes on the USA network on Saturday mornings. They did a segment called "On The Road With Nelson," and when they first came out they noticed the things on the rider in the contract like wheat grass juice and stuff, so they have sort of singled me out as the health advocate in the bunch. So every Saturday they say something about it in an ongoing series, which has lead to a lot of kids coming up to me and asking me questions about health and how to do this or that. It's really cool that people are very interested in it. People should do it gradually and approach it one step at a time.

MB: Let's talk about your early drumming experiences and how you became interested in drumming.

BR: The way that I became interested was that when I was ten years old, an older person in my neighborhood turned me on to Alice Cooper. I became fascinated with the man and his music, and in some of the local garage bands. The combination made me realize that I

wanted to become part of this whole thing. My dad had played drums years ago as an amateur, so we had an old set of drums in the attic. Within a year I started taking lessons from my first teacher, Randy May, who is better-known now for his May EA microphone systems. My first school band teacher, Mary Thompson, was also very instrumental in getting me active with the school band and reading music. From there I got into garage bands and playing parties, and I think I played my first club date when I was about 15. I did a lot of gigging, playing, and practicing.

MB: Were your parents supportive of your aspirations for a drumming career?

BR: I'm very close to my parents, and I shudder to think where I'd be without their support, from the very beginning. My mom used to drive me way across town to my drum lessons. They'd let me practice in the house whenever I wanted to, and when I was 15 they allowed me to soundproof my room with carpet and egg cartons, which made it look like an insane asylum. They've always supported me both financially and emotionally when I needed it. Trying to do what I've

done without their help, well...I can't imagine where I'd be.

MB: I know that you are a big practice enthusiast, and that is obvious from your book and video. What inspired you to do the *Metamorphosis* project?

BR: I had the idea to do a book ever since I was a senior in high school. In fact a lot of the grooves in the book are things that I was doing back then. I had always compiled different ideas and grooves from my studies at Berklee, and when I got into teaching heavily after coming home from Berklee I put together a lot more. Teaching allowed me to see what was happening and what wasn't.

MB: Did you spend a lot of time practicing during your formative years?

BR: I always say that if you sit in a room by yourself practicing long enough, you reach a point where you find unusual things that are quite self-indulgent, but that lend something to whatever you do. There was a period in my life when all I did was practice music and study all day. I just wanted to get better and explore all the possibilities. I would go down into the practice room at 11:00 or 12:00 at night, practice all night, then clean up



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for breakfast and go to classes all day, then catch a little sleep after dinner and start the routine over again.

MB: How did your experience at Berklee affect your playing and career?

BR: I was fortunate to study with two of the finest teachers while I was there. They opened new doors for me. Lenny Nelson and Ed Kaspic helped to round out my approach to playing. Lenny helped me get into soloing concepts, because he was into very unique and advanced approaches to soloing, where he would incorporate bop influences. He was also very inspirational in his approach to practicing and the lesson as a whole, as far as going the extra mile.

With Ed Kaspic I studied polyrhythmic, funk, and Latin concepts. A lot of what is in my *Metalmorphosis* book stems from some of the ideas that he inspired. He firmly believed that you should be able to do anything with any of the four limbs so that you can incorporate things as you need them. He is very improvisation-oriented, and every semester we would attack new and different subjects, which got into the very intellectual side of practicing and playing. The last few lessons of the semester

would be totally improvisational, where I would have to pull things right off the top of my head.

MB: Do you recommend schooling for drummers coming through the ranks now?

BR: It's really an individual thing. Someone who has no desire to delve into things other than heavy metal would be wasting their time, because if they aren't open to it, it won't do them any good. Universities are very heavily into the academic studies, and I wasn't, so I chose the Berklee option.

MB: Do you feel that underdeveloped playing skills and a lack of versatility are the downfall for many people?

BR: I really do. I don't get as many calls now as I used to, because everybody knows I've got this gig. But after I left the Vinnie Vincent thing I heard about a lot of gigs and I didn't always feel they were right for me. Then they would ask me if I knew any other drummers, but to tell you the truth, it's hard to find somebody, especially in the heavy rock scene, who can really play and lay down a heavy groove. A lot of people laugh at the rock drummers who are playing the simplistic stuff, but you'd be surprised at how few

drummers can go in and lay down a heavy, nasty, in-the-pocket 4/4 groove.

I've had long hair since I was 13; that just kind of happened naturally. There's a difference between what people call a "poser"—someone who dresses the part—and those who live the part. That's why I think going out and getting experience and really learning how to play is valuable. I followed the philosophy at one time that I was going to lock myself in a room and not come out until I was the best drummer in the world. But what gets you to that kind of level is just the opposite. Going out and playing in all different situations is the way to get good. Then things happen, you meet people, and it's all a series of little leads.

That's how I got into the Vinnie Vincent thing. Because I was playing on the circuit, I became friendly with another band that was produced by Dana Strum, the bass player who was putting together the band with Vinnie Vincent. That was the series of events that lead to that happening. Had I not been able to play or had I been locked in my room, the guy probably wouldn't have given me Dana's number, and I wouldn't have gotten the gig.



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Professional Career: 1968-72—Toured with Don Ellis Big Band • 1973-74—Toured with Frank Zappa and the Mothers of Invention • 1976—Toured with Seals and Crofts • 1981—Toured with Al Jarreau • 1982-Present—Member of Free Flight • 1983—Toshiko Aklyoshi/Lew Tabackin Big Band • Interim stints with: Alphonso Johnson, Larry Carlton, Manhattan Transfer, Pete Christlieb, Michael Ruff, Ray Pizzi, Joe Farrell, Dr. L. Subramaniam, John Gerry, John Klemmer, Milcho Leviev, Moacir Santos

Recording Career: Don Ellis, Seals and Crofts, Manhattan Transfer, Mothers of Invention - Zappa, England Dan/John Ford Coley, Marc Jordan, Captain & Tennille, Gap Mangione, Al Jarreau, Pages, Ray Pizzi, Caldera, Jose Feliciano, Wayne Shorter, Free Flight, Ken Wiley, Michael Hoenig

Teaching: 1970-Present—Private Instructor • 1981-Present—Co-director of Curriculum at the PERCUSSION INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY • Clinics—Given as a member of Don Ellis Band, Free Flight. • Others include: Ray Ayotte Drum Center, Vancouver; Down Beat Jazz Festival, Chicago; NAMM, Los Angeles, introducing Yamaha Electronic Percussion System; North Texas State U., Denton, Texas.

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Outwardly it may appear to be luck that gets some people ahead, but you create your situation. If some A&R guy in L.A. happened to walk into a club and see you play and think that you would be perfect to replace the drummer in a band he recently signed, you might say that was lucky. But the truth is, since you could play, you made that opportunity happen. I'm not a believer in luck in the traditional sense of the word.

MB: Playing with Vinnie Vincent was really your first appearance on the national scene. How did that come about?

BR: I was doing a lot of teaching in Houston back in '84 or '85, after coming back from Berklee, and I was off on a jazz fusion thing. I had a lot of chops and everything, but I wanted to get into the hard-hitting stuff. I felt that was one of the things missing in my playing. I hadn't done that since I was in high school.

So after I got a taste of some of it again, I thought maybe it wouldn't be so bad if I hooked up with somebody who was signed and did the arenas and get that out of my system. Once I planted that thought in my mind, it was just a

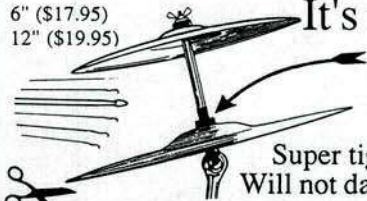
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matter of a few months later that the Vinnie Vincent thing came up. I heard that this band on the circuit, Sweet Savage, was being produced by Dana, and that this guy from KISS, Vinnie, was putting a band together. So I went in through the back door with Dana and begged him to let me come out and audition.

It was a classic example of me loading up the beat-up Ford van and borrowing money from my family to get out to the audition to get the gig. It was the kind of nightmarish audition that I had always heard about, with tons of drummers lined up with their kits stacked up, waiting to audition. I just went in to play, and even though it was a metal gig, it was the Latin and fusion licks that they saw in my playing that interested them—because it was different—as well as my ability to hit hard.

I was with the band for three years and did two records with them. I don't regret anything about that experience, but I feel that I paid about ten years worth of dues in a three-year time period. Anything that could have happened to a band—management misunderstandings, anything a record company could do wrong—*did* go wrong with that band. I really feel that it

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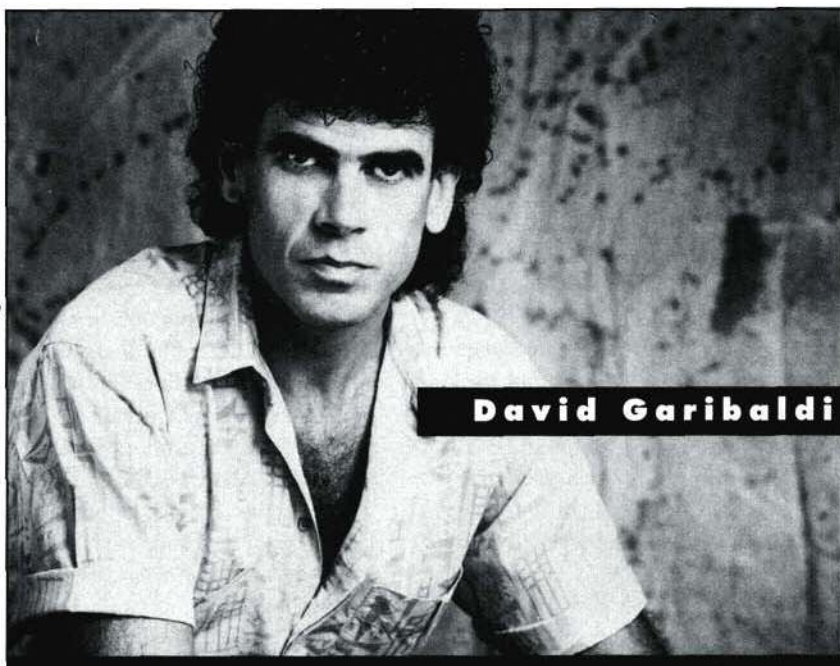
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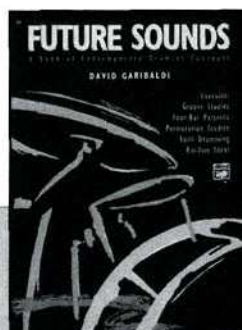
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was a crash course in how to avoid a career's worth of mistakes.

MB: Just as the Nelson project was gearing up, you went out on a clinic tour with a rhythm section. How did that come about?

BR: Sabian had a few gigs set up for me, which I normally fly in and do by myself at a music store. For the longest time I had wanted to take my clinics to the next level, where I could apply a lot of the ideas from my book and video in a live playing situation. Not only did I want to have a rhythm section with me, but I wanted to use my own gear and have my own tech there and do a mini tour.

So I proposed to Sonor and Sabian that we do a bunch of dates around the ones they had already scheduled, where we could travel on the ground and really do this tour thing. I got two of my favorite musicians in the world to go with me, Brett from Nelson, and an old roommate of mine from Berklee, Carl "The Fox" Carter. These guys are such monster players that it worked out well. I could really explain to the clinic audiences how certain grooves worked in a musical context. We did about 25 dates all over the country, even working in some club dates. It was the most elaborate clinic that I've ever heard of.

MB: How did you become an endorser for Sabian and Sonor?

BR: The bottom line is a question of visibility for the company. Michael Jordan, the

basketball player, could be as good as he is, but if he was playing on a street somewhere where no one knew him, he wouldn't have the endorsements that he does. It's not always strictly a matter of talent.

When I became involved with Vinnie Vincent, I was in a much better position to approach the companies I chose to. I had always considered Sonor drums to be the best, but I could never really afford them. Sabian was new at the time, so I was curious about them, and after doing some A/B types of analysis, I became really impressed with their cymbals. The Sabians just knocked me out, head and shoulders above the rest. I just wanted to get the best gear possible. Pro-Mark seemed like a natural choice because I had always played them, and being from Houston, where Pro-Mark is made, it's a natural. The same is true with LP, whose products I've always played and loved.

All the companies have been very supportive, and early on Sabian really pushed my clinics to the stores, which kind of put them out on a limb. I had set up a clinic in Houston and videotaped it and sent it off, and they really liked it and put me on the roster and set me to work.

MB: I'd like to get your thoughts on some conceptual topics. What do you think about practical application versus artistic satisfaction? Realizing that people have limited amounts of practice time and have to make a choice, which would you recom-

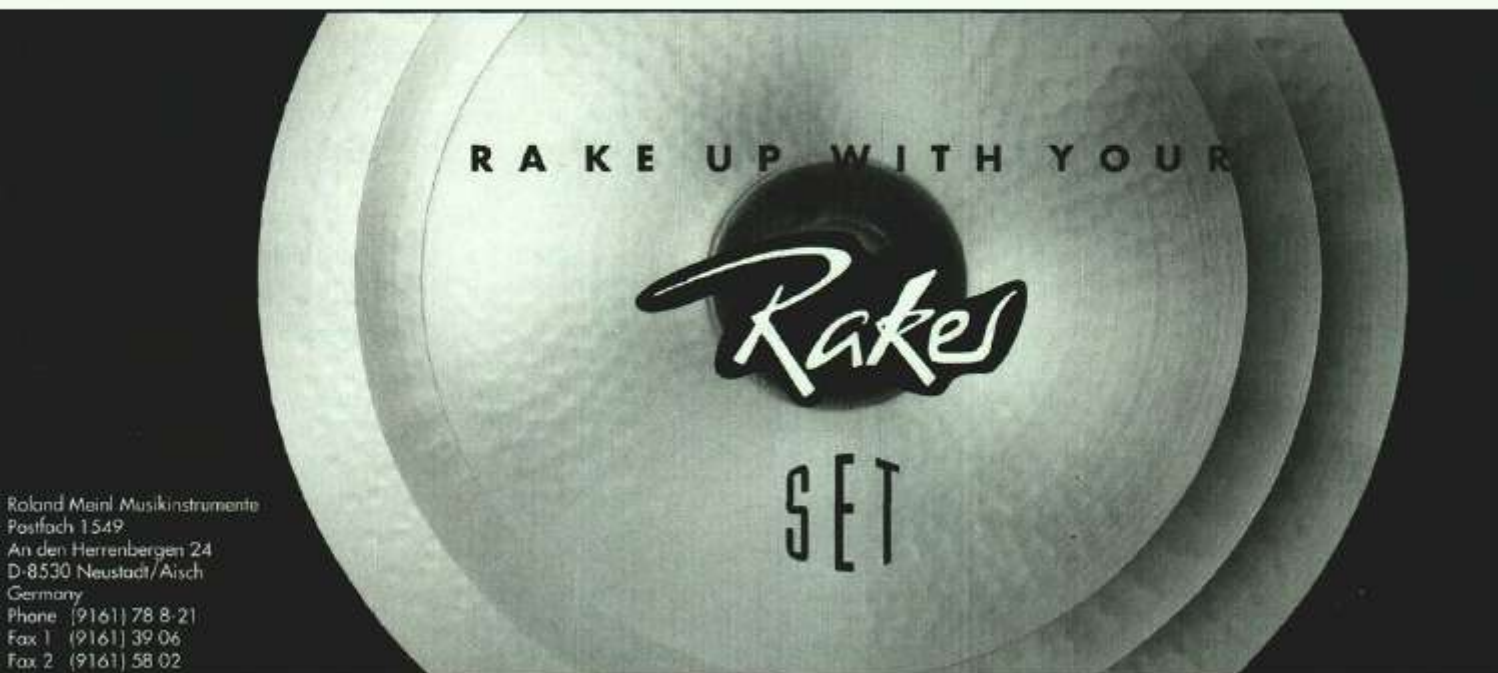
mend?

BR: It depends on what your goals are. I feel that practice is very important, and that we don't make enough time for it. There is always another hour of practicing that needs to be done. It doesn't have to be behind the drumset; it can be in front of the TV, hitting a practice pad, or it could be in 15-minute intervals throughout the day. I mean, take the million-dollar test: If someone said they'd give you a million dollars if you'd practice ten extra hours a week, you *would* find the time.

Back to your question, though, the funny thing is that, in terms of the practical things a drummer does—keeping a groove, keeping time and the like—it's important to work on those things. But I think that if all we do is work on the practical or standard drumming things, we're only maintaining or perpetuating the present level of where drumming is. If we are going to propel drumming forward, we have to go out and "push the envelope," so to speak, and become adventurous. It stands to reason that if you can do the real technical things, the standard things will come that much easier.

MB: When you sit down to practice, what type of philosophy do you approach it with?

BR: I go through different phases, such as when I'm on the road or if I'm at home and have lots of time. I think about the immediate thing—like what's going on in the next 30 to 60 days, whether I have a



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clinic coining up—and how my practicing can be directed toward those things. It's always nice to have a goal, because it gives you the incentive to work on something new.

I've always tried to single out certain things as a focal point for a few weeks or a month—like independence things for soloing, where I'll come up with some kind of ostinato thing with my feet and improvise with my hands. Another could be my double bass drumming for different speeds, licks, or combinations. Of course the hands are a year-round thing; that's a given. I spend a lot of time on my hands and I'm a firm believer in the practice pad, because it always comes in handy. Late at night, if you're in an apartment or hanging at the hotel, you can always work on it, and that has inspired me to write the book I'm currently working on, which is strictly for hands. As with the *Metamorphosis* book, I had all these hand coordination and speed ideas saved up over the years. I hope to have the book out by the end of this year.

The routine I'm into now, because of the tour, is that I have my practice kit set up in my room or backstage at the venue, and I work on the book, and then when I get to the gig I work on the drumset before or after soundcheck. Every night after the gig—this is very important—I get at least an hour in on the practice pad. I think that's where you get the serious chops, because after hitting the pad

throughout the day and then on the gig, most people will call it quits. If I'm back at the room, or if we're traveling on the bus, I'll retire to the back and work on the pad for an hour, no matter how tired I am. Even after coming home from casuals when I lived in Houston, I would do that, to go that extra mile.

MB: What was your inspiration for your *Metamorphosis* drum video?

BR: I wanted to do it because I felt that I had some valid material to offer. I was getting into a lot of things in my clinics, but at the time my name recognition wasn't such that it allowed me to attract the opportunity. If you're not a well-known personality in the drumming industry, it can limit those possibilities. Even above and beyond that, I wasn't happy with a lot of the videos I was seeing, even though there was some good playing on them. I just felt that it could be presented in a more entertaining way. I hooked up with a company called Syntax Productions out of Houston and explained all of my ideas to them. They approached it from an independent investor point of view, and it was really too good to be true. They financed it, and I had complete creative control. I got some good people involved, like Jim Cary, the producer and director of it, who had a lot of documentary experience. I just wanted it to be entertaining as well as educational. I didn't know if any distributors would want to get involved, so we planned to do direct mail order and create

a ground swell of interest through advertising. It worked out well, and now DCI distributes the video and Belwin distributes the book.

MB: What is your perspective on the politics of the music industry? What are your beliefs regarding people getting to where they want to go?

BR: That's probably the most commonly asked question when I'm doing clinics and touring. Somebody has a band or is a drummer, and they want to know how to hook up with management or a record company or whatever. The thing is that there is no magical answer. If I knew of a formula that would work every time or that would get your foot in the door, I'd be a millionaire with a best-selling book.

My experience is that every drummer I've talked to and band I've met has made it in a different way. You can look through a stack of *Modern Drummer* magazines, and the circumstances will be different for each person. Sometimes it's rather standard and other times it's really weird. All I can talk about is how it happened for me and the experiences I've had. I'm a firm believer that if you can play, which to me is the most important thing, you will somehow find your way. I don't know how or who you're going to meet, or who you'll feel moved to call, or who may refer you, or whatever. But if you really play, I think a lot of doors will open up. Every gig I've gotten is because I could play, first and foremost.



Philippe Allaert
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MICHAEL HAMPTON, EDDIE HAZEL,
DEWAYNE "BLACKBYRD" McNIIGHT,
CORDELL "BOOGIE" MOSSON, GARY
SHIDER: gtr
RODNEY "SKEET" CURTIS: bs
BERNIE WORRELL: kybd
JEROME ROGERS: kybd
GREG BOYER, BERNIE COWAN, GREG
THOMAS: horns
GEORGE CLINTON, GARY "MUDBONE"
COOPER, LIGE CURRY, RON FORD,
ROBERT "PEANUT" JOHNSON, MICHAEL
"CLIP" PAYNE: vcls

P-Funk (Wants To Get Funked Up);
Do That Stuff; Cosmic Slop; Let's
Take It To The Stage; Mothership
Connection; I Call My Baby Pussycat;
Give Up The Funk (Tear The Roof
Off The Sucker); (Not Just) Knee
Deep; Maggot Brain; One Nation
Under A Groove; Atomic Dog; Flash
Light

Dennis Chambers' days with the P-Funk crew were influential but under-recorded. He was mainly George Clinton's live drummer, and appears on

only a few studio tracks from that time. This recording of a show in Hollywood from 1983 is like the missing link in the Chambers discography. Hearing him wail in this setting is really a treat. His time is right and the grooves are a lesson in power funk.

The P-Funk horns tongue a staccato line on "Give Up The Funk," and D.C.'s double bass further inflames the crowd. His 32nd-note hi-hat frills in the midst of the wild funkishness of "Knee Deep" are subtle and inspiring, while he seems to have four hands on parts of "One Nation Under A Groove."

Dennis Chambers is a big name in drumming now, but he's been a powerhouse for some time. His remarkable playing with John Scofield, Wayne Krantz, and others is a little more understandable after hearing this release.

• **Robin Tolleson**

SMASHING PUMPKINS

gish

Caroline Carol 1705-2

JIMMY CHAMBERLIN: dr

BILLY CORGAN: gtr, vcl

JAMES IHA: gtr

D'ARCY: bs, vcl

I Am One; Siva; Rhinoceros; Bury Me; Crush; Suffer; Snail; Tristessa; Window Paine; Daydream



One of the reasons Jimmy Chamberlin's drumming sounds so good on *gish* is that his playing style matches the band's personality so well—let's call it "tastefully placed excess." Smashing Pumpkins are in high gear a lot of the time, with lots of screeching twin guitar nastiness, noisy solos and riffing, and trance-like heaviness. What's really nice, though, is that there's always a pop sensibility beneath all the mayhem, so the songs move—melodically, rhythmically, and dynamically. Chamberlin fits right in, lifting songs from section to section with ballsy and blazing fills. But he never seems to be letting loose just to hear himself play—he's always furthering the song's arrangements.

The Pumpkins aren't afraid to take the dynamics way down, either, and Chamberlin is right there, too, either with soft ghost notes ("Siva"), some delicate tom action (the mysterious "Suffer"), or his general good habit of laying

beats on different parts of the snare drum or cymbals to mix or heat things up a bit.

There's some great drumming on *gish*, largely because there's some great *music* on it too. If only it were like that more often.

• **Adam Budofsky**

PHEEROAN AKLAFF

Sonogram

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PHEEROAN AKLAFF: dr

JOHN STUBBLEFIELD, CARLOS WARD: sx

SONNY SHARROCK: gtr

KENNY DAVIS: bs

Bit Her; Serious; Alligator And Kangaroo; Tout De Suite; Sonogram; Juggler



If you want to know how God might have meant drums to sound, buy this record. Pheeroan akLaff and engineer/producer Bob Musso have created the biggest, warmest, deepest, fullest, most luscious drum sound these sample-worn ears have enjoyed in a long time—maybe ever. Add the most expansive cymbals since 1965 Tony Williams and you're in drummer's heaven.

All the tunes are akLaff's except Miles' "Tout De Suite." The style is an eminently listenable freebop that conjures the spiritual quest of Coltrane, the unpredictable fire of Hendrix, and the communal chants of ancient civi-

lizations. Sonny Sharrock's guitar, now clear liquid, now dark distortion, gives an ethereal edge to John Stubblefield's melancholy tenor and Carlos Ward's pungent alto. Drummer and bassist complement each other well, one intuitively assuming an elastic pulse when the other reaches into the unknown. Kenny Davis's warm, rubbery tone is an easy companion to akLaff's deep resonance.

You hear thematic echoes of Max on *Sonogram* (especially in the rondo-like solo title track), the melodic curve of DeJohnette, the warmth and humor of Blakey, even the sensuous tom-tom signals of Krupa and Baker—with that big, proud tone that embraces the whole history of skin stretched across wood.

• **Harold Howland**

ANDREA MARCELLI

Silent Will

Verve/Forecast 843 652-2

ANDREA MARCELLI: dr, synth, perc

ALEX ACUNA: perc

BOB BERG: tn sx

MITCH FORMAN: pno

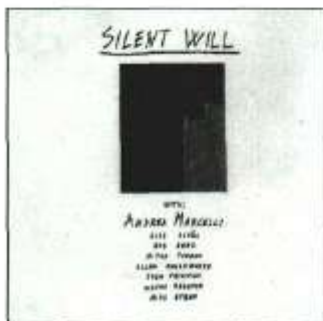
ALLAN HOLDSWORTH: gtr

JOHN PATITUCCI: bs

WAYNE SHORTER: sp sx

MIKE STERN: gtr

Exit; Silent Will; Final Project ; Different Moments; Remembered; Three Small Dreams; Every Day; Lights



Much of the music on *Silent Will* seems tailor-made for its participants. Sparse, wide-open expanses of sound allow the soloists ample room to spark, burn, and ravage their way through Marcelli's uncluttered, streamlined compositions, which sound heavily influenced by the recent work of Wayne Shorter and Mike Stern.

Marcelli's drumming is also a masterwork of sparseness. He seems content to play a supportive role, a la Chad Wackerman, while the attending heavyweights strut their stuff. When he does break out, we get a flurry of combinations in a Tony Williams mode, or a funky, Richie Hayward-ish syncopation.

The release of this recording by a major label should be an inspiration to musicians everywhere who are looking for a break. The persistent Marcelli presented demo tapes to musicians on their gigs, then waited for the phone to ring. Surprisingly, it did, and word spread. Within a year the band was locked up and in the studio. Hats off to determination and talent.

• **Ken Micallef**

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As much credit as Al Jackson is given for having a great feel, he is sometimes dismissed as a one-beat drummer who played the same 8th-note hi-hat with snare drum backbeats on every tune. As this nine-CD boxed set proves, there was more to



Jackson than that. There were numerous variations of his basic beat, including straight fours on the snare (Otis Redding's "Respect"), clock-ticking rim clicks (Redding's "Try A Little Tenderness"), an occasional Latin influence (various Booker T. & the M.G.'s tunes), and the New Orleans "Popeye" beat (Oscar Mack's "Dream Girl").

Jackson isn't the only drummer represented on this collection, but the absence of specific personnel listings for the tracks makes it difficult to ascertain exactly who is who. Howard Grimes probably did most of the drumming on the first disc, and he presumably continued to do some sessions after Jackson became involved with Stax. It's also likely that Jackson's protege Carl Cunningham appears on some of the tracks.

But it's a known fact that Jackson and his colleagues from Booker T. & the M.G.'s did most of the playing on Stax/Volt releases, and the consistent sound and style of the drumming on these 244 tracks bears that out. Jackson's uncluttered style, his laying back of the snare drum (sometimes on both backbeats, sometimes just on the 4), and his devotion to serving the song set the mold for countless studio drummers to follow.

• **Rick Mattingly**

STEFAN KARLSSON

Room 292

Justice 0701-4

SEBASTIAN WHITTAKER: dr

STEFAN KARLSSON: pno

MIKE POPE: bs

TIM HAGANS, MAGNUS BROO: trp

B-Hive Bop; On Green Dolphin Street; Get Out Of Bed; Summer Waltz; Quantum; Cotton Tail; The Summer Off; Blues For Jac; Your Ballad; Room 292; Easy Living



This Houston recording taps the current world bounty of young Blakey disciples, and it tends the flame with spirited playing and solid writing. The familiar jazz forms are ably represented: boppers, standards, a waltz, a bossa, a blues, a needlessly double-timed ballad. (The liner ironically preaches, "Recycle Paper, Not Music.")

Karlsson, an attractive, lyrical pianist and a thoughtful composer, surrenders most of the space to his overreaching sidemen. Drummer Sebastian Whittaker distinguishes himself primarily through feathery brushwork and a warm, earthy tone. Like most unseasoned drummers, Whittaker tends to speak up when he ought to listen, but his chops are strong and his ideas authentic. He relies on nimble hands for nearly everything, reserving his bass drum and hi-hat for traditional support. His song-form solos crackle with confidence,

humor, and promise.

If you're playing this tape in your car and you come home and find that all your mainstream jazz records have been devoured by aliens, *Room 292* will serve as a pleasant, temporary reminiscence.

• **Harold Howland**

VIDEO

DOANE PERRY

Creative Listening

VDO Productions

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Canoga Park CA 91307

Time: 85 minutes

Price: \$44.95

Doane Perry, Jethro Tull's current rhythmist, has wisely chosen the underappreciated topic of listening as the theme of his first video. Doane passes along his experience by playing along to pre-recorded tracks and then discussing the various things he keeps in mind when deciding what to play along to these tracks.

Some of the other topics covered on the tape are playing along with clicks and drum machines, double bass, and soloing. In addition, there's a cassette tape that includes the tunes found on the video—one side with drums, one without—and printed transcriptions of those tunes and of the double bass drum exercises Doane demonstrates on the video.

Perry is well-spoken, with clear and well-conceived ideas, which helps make his concepts that much clearer and applicable. The tape's production quality is very good, with nice camera angles and movement, good lighting, and great drum sounds. There's even some live Tull footage thrown in for spice. A great package on a subject well-worth investigation.

• **Adam Budofsky**

BOOKS

STUDIO TECHNIQUES

by Emil Richards

Interworld Music

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San Francisco CA 94102

Price: \$20.00

Designed as a textbook for a ten-week course on studio percussion, Emil Richards' *Studio Techniques* deals more with the business and etiquette of being a studio percussionist than with developing technique. That's not to say that the book does not contain any music to play. In fact there are quite a few pages of music that has been adapted from actual studio charts. But the purpose of this music seems to be more to give you an idea of the type of parts you may encounter in the studios. If you can't handle this material, you need to look elsewhere for more developmental exercises.

The bulk of the book is text, and some of the material is similar to articles that Richards has written for *Modern Drummer* columns. He discusses such topics as how to get calls, arrange for cartage, and get paid, to dealing with conductors, composers, and copyists, to making your own instruments or adapting standard instruments to non-standard uses.

Most of the material is geared towards film and TV work and involves full percussion, such as vibes, marimba, and timpani. But some of the information on business and general studio behavior could also apply to drumset players doing jingles and records. In short, anyone doing any type of studio work could learn at least a little bit from this book.

• **Rick Mattingly**

BRAZILIAN RHYTHMS FOR DRUMSET

by Duduka Da Fonesca

and Bob Weiner

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(book and audio cassette)

Like the two previous installments in its series, this authoritative 79-page book and cassette package enhances its technical information with valuable historical/cultural background. Several Brazilian styles are covered from samba, bossa nova, and baião to the rhythms of religious and processional music such as maracatu, marcha, and frevo.

Naturally, the samba section is the most extensive. Samba's *batucada* sources (as traditionally played by percussion only) are broken down, and each instrument is discussed. The layered percussion parts are then applied to drumset in increasingly challenging combinations. The authors suggest their own grooves and also include transcriptions of major stylists such as Airto and Edison Machado. A later section briefly outlines approaches to odd meter sambas.

The clear, expertly played audio examples that parallel the book are especially helpful in expressing how the phrasing of Brazilian patterns is more important than the printed note. This book will delight any musician interested in the joyful, rolling rhythms of Brazil.

• **Jeff Potter**

4's: THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO LEARNING SYNCOPATION

by Brian Alpert & Dave Palamar

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The "Syncopation" in this book's title refers to Ted Reed's book of that name, which drummers have used for years as the basis for a variety of drumset exercises. These procedures, many of which were originated by Alan Dawson, have been passed through the drumming community by word of mouth for many years. Alpert and Palamar have now documented some of the more popular exercises while adding a few of their own.

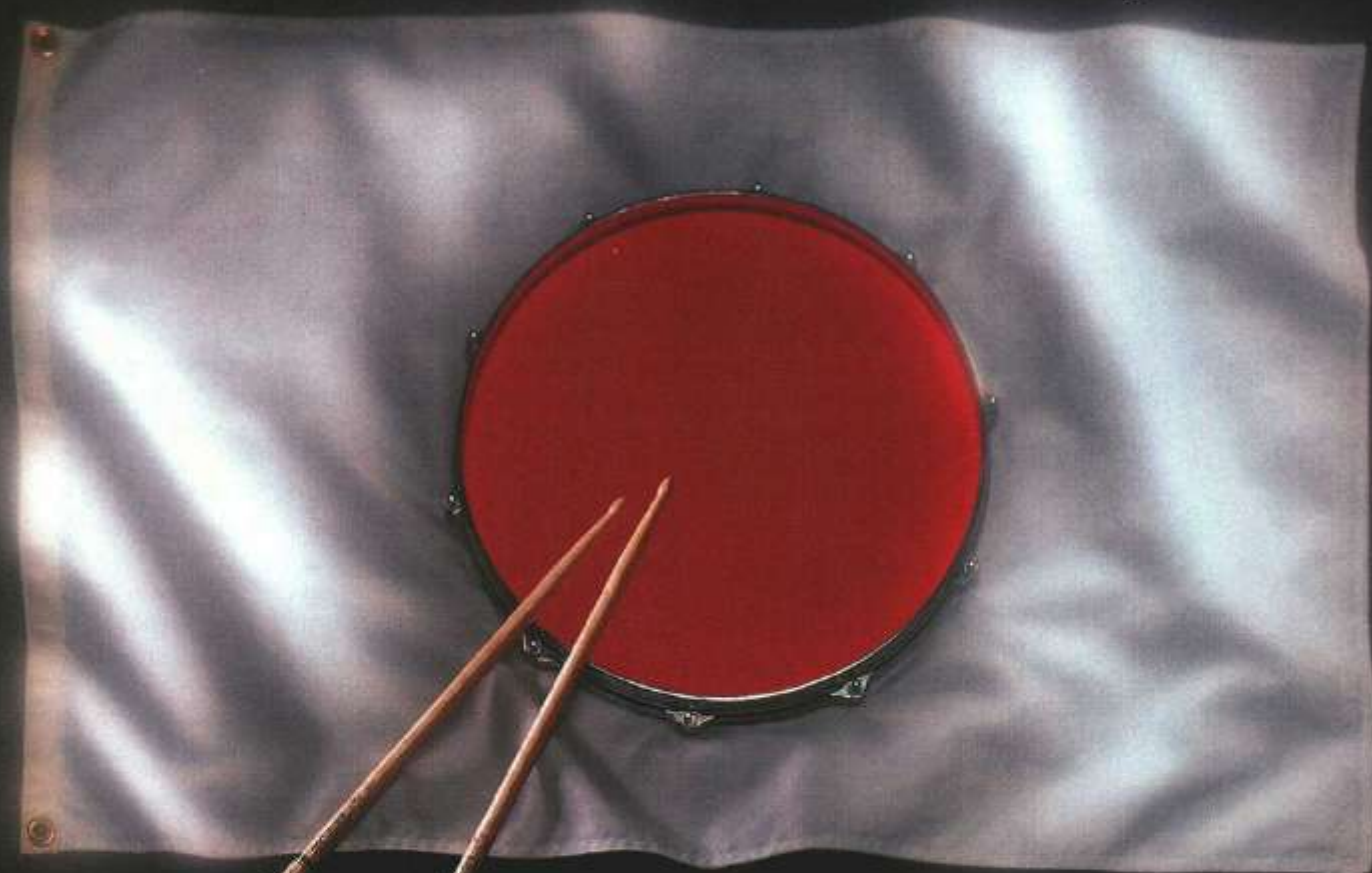
This book is mostly text, and must be used in conjunction with Reed's book. The explanations are fairly clear, although a few written examples might have helped clarify some of the more involved exercises for less-experienced players. But any good teacher should be able to figure them out. Most of the exercises are written in the jazz triplet style, but there are a few straight 8th and 16th applications given, and some of the triplet exercises could easily be adapted. There is also a chapter devoted to singing the *Syncopation* rhythms, based on a system of assigning different syllables to notes depending on their length and whether they are on or off the beat.

• **Rick Mattingly**

The price of *Rick's Licks*, reviewed in this past August's *Critique* column, is: \$12.95 for each book \$10.95 for the cassette. Rick also has a new address: 2001 Bonnymead Dr., #67, Mississauga, Ontario Canada L6J 4H8.



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continued from page 33

spacing of a program, styles of music, and stage presentation. Even the older guys who were once young leaders had a lot of sideman experience first. Art Blakey worked with Billy Eckstine's band for years before he formed the Messengers. Think of all the people Jack DeJohnette, Roy Haynes, and Tony Williams played with before they became leaders.

JP: I don't know too many jazz drummers who got their start at Harvard, with a degree in East Asian studies/sociology. How did you gain all that jazz experience in your school years?

AT: Maybe I shouldn't put that on my resume, [laughs] I just loved the music, but it was basically a sideline, a hobby. By the last couple of years at Harvard, I was already gigging around town. I lived off campus and was hanging at New England Conservatory because I was drawn to the music. I was working weekends at a Boston jazz club, Wally's, for about a year, getting a chance to play with people who were developing there at the time like Ricky Ford, James Williams, Claudio Roditi, Boots Malson, and Bill Pierce. Before I graduated, I knew I wanted to go

into music.

Also, a big influence during those years was Billy Hart, who I met through a mutual friend. He and I became friends, and he stayed with me when he came through Boston playing with Stan Getz, Herbie Hancock, McCoy, and others. We used to practice, hang out, and go to concerts. When he was with Herbie he asked me, "Do you want to play with the band?" I hadn't any experience playing on *that* level.

It was a concert at Boston University, and I don't even know if Billy asked Herbie or not, but we just showed up. So we did the show with both of us drumming together plus a percussionist, Sa Davis. After the concert, Herbie said, "We're playing at The Jazz Workshop [a famous Boston jazz club]. Do you want to play with us on the weekend?" That was during Herbie's *Mwandishi* and *Crossings* period.

The music was so open. And I hadn't even had that much experience playing standards! It was incredible. We played a straight-ahead walking tune, and Billy and I both started walking 4/4. Buster Williams was on bass, and he told me to

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lay out. So at first I thought, "Oh, wow, I did something wrong!" But he pulled me aside afterwards and said, "When a bass player is walking, it's hard enough to hook up with *one* drummer in that kind of groove."

That gig was like a dream come true, and I basically went by instinct from what I heard. Billy said, "Don't worry about the arrangements, just play." He played the music so strongly, and I added color like a percussionist.

In my last year at Harvard, I also studied with Alan Dawson for a year, which was a great experience. Billy said, "Use my name and try to study with him, because he's one of the greatest teachers." He is phenomenal. I also got involved with radio at Harvard. I was a DJ on the college station, WHRB. When I was home in California between semesters, I got a summer job at KJAZ. Doing radio work was a great listening education. I subbed for certain DJs there doing a graveyard shift. There weren't many commercials, and there was a vast library of recordings, so I was able to listen all night.

I'm still continuing my involvement

with radio today. Teruo Nakamura, a producer who owns Cheetah Records, is a very good friend of mine. He offered me an hour-a-week jazz program, commercial-free, in which I get to program what I want. So I've been doing it for a year and a half now.

JP: At New England Conservatory, was your jazz growth held back when you switched to the percussion program?

AT: I felt like I put the jazz/drumset thing on the back burner. But in some ways, I think it helped because it opened up my concept of music. I got a chance to hang out with Harvey Mason when he came through Boston. He had studied with Vic Firth, and I told him what a great experience it was for me also. Harvey said, "That is probably the most valuable studying you'll ever do, because that's what will separate you from other drummers."

JP: In your conservatory years you earned a lot of big pro credits. How did you get that start from the Boston scene?

AT: I was working around town, and Keith Copeland called me to work with Helen Humes for two weeks. That was my first real work with a name jazz per-

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son. Major Holley was playing bass and Gerald Wiggins was on piano. Over the next two or three years, on and off, I worked with Helen on the road. I had to balance my schedule when I went out

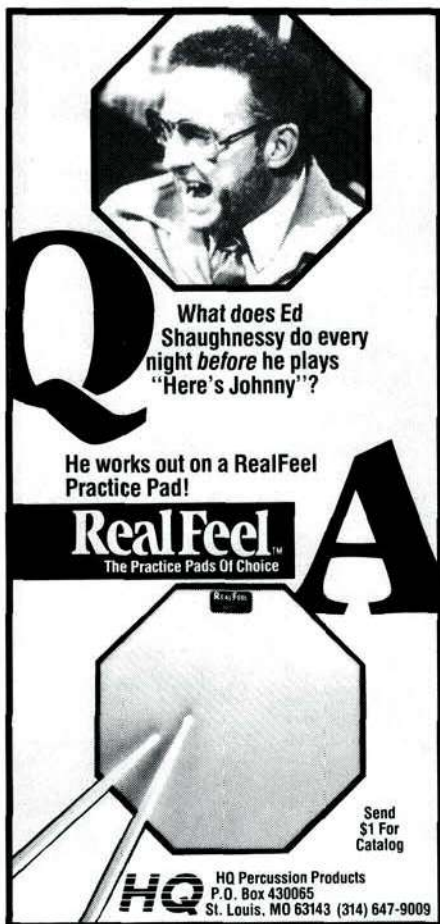
with her for three weeks in New Orleans so that I could continue my percussion studies. I actually sought high schools in the area through some local musicians in order to work it out to practice marimba

during the day. The school let me go on the condition that I could fulfill my requirements. Since I had already finished a liberal arts school, I only needed to take music courses, which made it easier to handle on the road.

Playing with Major Holley, I remember it was his *sound* more than anything else that amazed me. I can remember a good experience when we were playing an instrumental tune and I was trying to play too much stuff. Major turned to me and said, [imitating his gruff voice] "Hey! You know you've got to build a foundation before you build a house!" It was true. I needed to play some time, lay it down, establish the groove, and then let the music develop. You find that with youth: You have a lot of energy and don't value the simple things and how wonderful they can be.

JP: I find it amazing that you toured and kept school together. How did you manage that with the Sonny Rollins gig?

AT: A friend of mine, Jerry Harris, who was working with Sonny, told me there was an opening and that Sonny was holding auditions. The auditions were an all-day affair. I was the first there, and I played some duets with Sonny. Then he asked me to stick around—for the rest of the day. I waited all afternoon while other drummers auditioned. At the end of the



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day, he had me come in and play again with a rhythm section. Around early evening, he handed me the plane tickets.

So I went back to Boston and suddenly thought, "Wait a minute! I've got commitments at school!" I realized I was supposed to play a cymbal part in "Petrouchka" with the school orchestra. I tried to get out of it. I told them, "I have an opportunity to go on the road with one of the greatest jazz musicians of all time, and I can't pass it up." I went to the conductor and he said, "Your obligations are here at school, and if you're not going to be in the concert at this late date, you'll have to suffer the consequences."

JP: You couldn't sub out a cymbal crash for Sonny Rollins? Besides, wasn't the school meant to prepare you to play with the best musicians?

AT: Yeah! There were plenty of guys who could play the cymbal part better than me. [laughs] I took it all the way up to the president to plead my case. He said, "It's a fine line, but you're on partial scholarship and you've got an obligation." They wouldn't go for it. So I flunked out of orchestra because of it.

JP: Rollins is known for wanting everything to be fresh every night. He used to constantly change band members. That must have been a challenge.

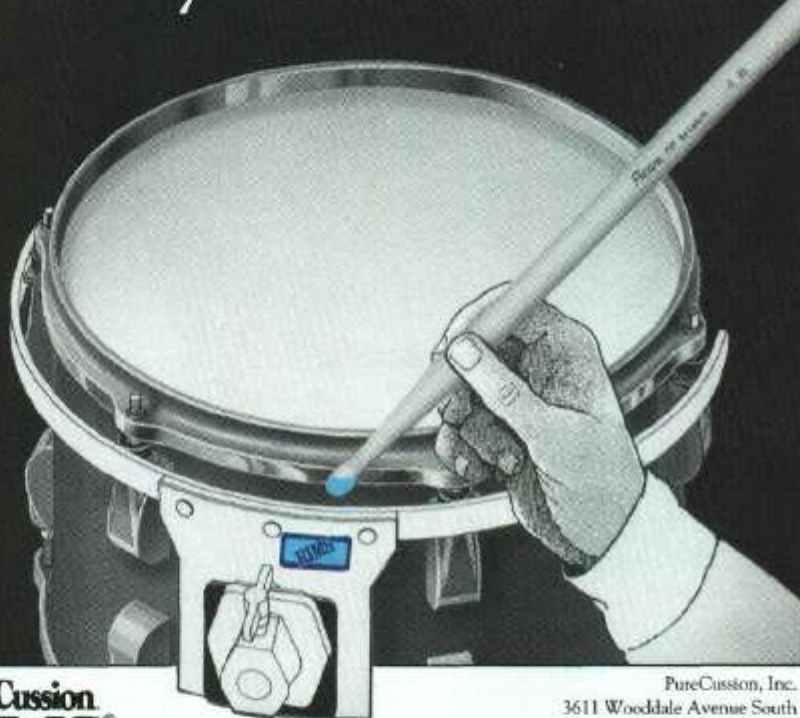
AT: I talked to Mickey Roker about that. I was over in Japan on tour, and I told Mickey I really enjoyed his playing on *Sonny Rollins On Impulse*. He said, "Sonny rehearsed us for two days with lots of original material and paid everybody for it. We got to the recording session and didn't do any of it!"

JP: What was your experience with Rollins?

AT: That was one of the first experiences I had being on the road and playing that kind of intense music on that level. We played some long sets. Physically and mentally, it was draining; I mean, I was sopping wet. On the last date in Akron, Ohio, we must have played a two-hour set.

I remember in Indianapolis, my monitor went out and I couldn't hear Sonny. We were playing a minor blues and he cut off the band. It was me and him—and I couldn't hear a note! So I just tried to keep the form of the blues

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as best as I could, and it worked out. It was an incredible experience because he was so open and so strong.

I don't mean this in a negative way, but Eddie Moore, who had drummed previously with Sonny, had said that it sometimes got to the point where it didn't feel like he was playing *with* him. Because Sonny was so strong, he led everything. I understand how Eddie felt about that, because you're there to provide the energy for Sonny to play his stuff rather than to interact. You can't really listen to Sonny in that sense. Jimmy Heath told me that Tootie Heath, who is a great drummer, worked with Sonny for a night, and it didn't work out between the two of them because he listened "too much" and went *right with him*. Sonny always plays with the time and phrases; if all of a sudden you go right with him, he may not want it. He's basically using you as a backdrop to create his own permutations of rhythmic and harmonic ideas.

JP: Did you sometimes have to consciously read the situation—adapt musically night to night rather than just approach the drums the way you "normally" play?

AT: As drummers, we're not like saxophone players; we're always providing a *sound* for whoever is soloing. So you sometimes have no idea of what soloists want to hear. Having various experiences with different vocabularies becomes very valuable in dealing with this.

This goes back to my point about studying different kinds of music. It's the same in classical. I remember rehearsing to play a timpani part in a Mozart piece up at Tanglewood, and Seiji Ozawa was supervising. He said to me, "You could consult Vic further about this, but there is a whole different vocabulary when you play Mozart." You can't approach it like Stravinsky. It's a different touch.

JP: What is that touch, specifically?

AT: It's a firm but lighter touch that's needed for chamber orchestra. It's the same thing when you play drumset in different styles of music. There's an entirely different vocabulary you have to be familiar with—to make the drum part sound *authentic*, not just as if you're learning the notes.

JP: Tell me about your time at the study/performance program at Tangle-

wood in 1979.

AT: The big thing at the Conservatory was to audition for Tanglewood. In my last year I auditioned and got in for the summer after I graduated. That was a hell of an experience. It was like a summer camp: eight weeks of just performing and rehearsing at a very high level. We played a lot of contemporary music like Varese and Ligeti. I got to play under people like Bernstein, Ozawa, Gunther Schuller, and Raymond Leppard. We did a Gunther Schuller piece that required three orchestras, including the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and I got to play in their percussion section. At the rehearsals, I noticed a lot of the musicians were just reading their parts and making mistakes—feeling their way around the piece, making notes and so forth. Vic Firth had to sit and wait through a lot of sections, so he would be looking through a stack of mail on his timpani, [laughs]

But when it came down to performing—I can still vividly feel the intensity, the concentration of Ozawa and all the members. That feeling was like the intensity between musicians on a band-

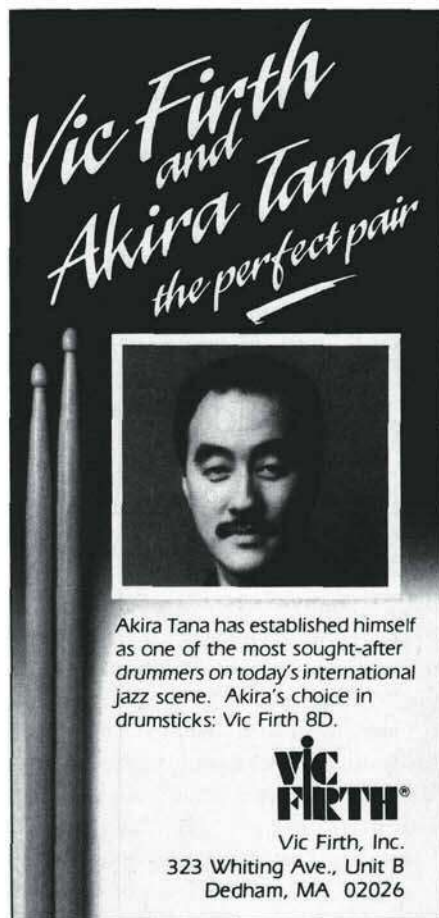


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JP: I remember Connie Kay commenting about the difficulty he first had when the MJQ played with the Boston Pops. His background is from a drumset/band approach, so he was driving the MJQ as usual. But the orchestra was used to reading the conductor's baton with a delay. It drove him crazy at first. Because of your classical training, you have had a lot of experience with conductors that most set drummers don't get enough of.

AT: Sometimes you'll be hearing things late, but you have to go with what's around you; out there it will sound together. Sometimes you'll play something and hear the trumpets or string section coming back to you. When the downbeat comes and the baton comes down, all of a sudden you play it and hear [sings a late entrance note]. I found myself, for lack of experience, anticipating where that downbeat should be, and all of a sudden someone would say, "Don't rush the beat!" So at first I felt, "What kind of stuff is *this*?" Then I figured that was the way it had to be. But once everything gets going, you can hear

the whole groove happening so that you can fit in there.

JP: You've been doing clinics. Earlier you talked about the need for apprenticeship for young players. What do you find is a common weakness with young drummers that they need to be coached on?

AT: I hear big bands with high school and college kids. The top ones are great. But I find this problem, especially with drummers: When they play funk, rock, or a Latin groove, man, there is a great energy and conviction. All of a sudden, they play a four-beat swing and they're on the hi-hat, [imitates a laid-back swing pattern] and they don't exist anymore. I point out at the clinics that, regardless of what kind of style you're playing, you have to project with the same kind of conviction that you would with Latin or funk.

JP: Why is that a common weakness?

AT: Because these kids haven't grown up with that music. They haven't listened to enough of it. I try to make them aware that it's more than just learning scales and notes. You have to immerse yourself in the environment, the sound of the music.

JP: As music gets more and more eclectic, it seems harder every year to be a fully-rounded drummer. Some young drummers want to specialize.

AT: That's true. But I can only speak for myself. I try to be as well-rounded as I can. Also, if you specialize, you must know your limitations: How many real Tony Williamses, Elvins, Gadds, or Weckls are there? I don't even consider myself a drummer on *that* level as far as being a stylist. I'm a well-rounded drummer who likes to play different kinds of music, and whatever musical opportunities come along, I try to do the best job I can and to be a professional musician. If something more comes out of it, fine. If nothing more comes out of being well-rounded, at least it will provide employment opportunities.

Another advantage of working with many different kinds of musicians is that it helps you discover how the music should dictate what you play or don't play on the drums. I was working at Sweet Basil's with Art Farmer, and Ben Riley was in the audience. Ben said, "It sounded good, but let the music play itself. Don't force things; the music is strong

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enough to make things happen." If you submit and let the music take care, everything will be fine.

Drummers like Ben, Roy Haynes—all those guys—the way they fit into the music comes from being *musicians* more than just being drummers. When I studied with Alan Dawson, I asked him about when Tony Williams studied with him. Alan said that he has had many great students, but looking back, he realized that Tony was really the one with the musical mind to develop his style and take it to a level beyond just learning to play drums. I'll never forget that. I stress at clinics that drummers have to be musicians. Drums are important because they are your instrument. But remember what they're there for. They are there for the music.

JP: Besides having an amazing musical mind himself, Dawson is a disciplinarian on technique. How did his technical drilling help you open up your musical mind?

AT: It's funny, because I never considered myself to be great on technique. As far as executing certain things, I'm kind of a sloppy player. [laughs] But what I

found to be more important—and what Alan stressed—was about playing the music. All of Alan's exercises were geared to be played while singing a tune and playing over its form. He approached the exercises in the *Syncopation* book like etudes—pieces of music rather than just patterns to be played over and over 25 times. I approach students that way: Even when you're playing an exercise, don't make it *sound* like an exercise. Then that discipline or attitude will carry over when you play music.

JP: You kidded about your technique, although you've worked with boppers like Sonny Stitt. He enjoyed playing relentlessly fast bebop tempos. Having endurance and a fast ride seems essential for his music.

AT: The faster the tempo gets, the less you should think in terms of [counts fast and frantically] "1, 2, 3, 4!" Instead, you should think [relaxed] "1...1...1...!" If you think in those terms, it will free you up. There are very few drummers who can keep up the ride pattern at that tempo and make it feel relaxed. Conversely, in a slow ballad tempo, you have to think double to keep the forward

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motion happening. Even bass players don't dig in so hard on fast tempos. When you dig in, it stiffens you up. It's the same for a drummer; you can't keep that up unless you're Superman.

JP: You've worked with Paquito D'Rivera and with Claudio Roditi. Those artists often have their drum chair covered by drummers like Ignacio Berroa and Portinho—players with heavy Latin backgrounds. How did you arrive at those gigs?

AT: The recommendation to Paquito came through Claudio, who I've made four records with. I actually got together with Ignacio when I was first called, and he showed me a couple of basic rhythms.

JP: Basic rhythms? I think you're being humble. Paquito's Latin grooves demand quite a lot.

AT: I knew there was a certain *sound* he was looking for in the drums, and I tried as best as I could to match it, even though I'm not as versed in that vocabulary as some other guys. But I looked at it as an opportunity to learn.

Working with Claudio, I learned a lot and became more aware of the regional differences within the Brazilian rhythms.

Different regions have different ways of approaching the beat, nuances, and anticipations in samba rhythms. It's the same thing with the regional differences of jazz drumming—a New Orleans drummer versus a guy from Philly or Chicago or Boston. Claudio is pretty open. It's interesting that Brazilians feel flattered, so to speak, to hear non-Brazilians playing their music. Claudio is willing to teach if a musician is interested.

Before I started the tour with Paquito in LA., we had one or two rehearsals, and I listened to his records with limited time. Alex Acuna was playing with a Latin band that opened for us, and Joe Zawinul was in the audience. I thought, "Oh, man! It's my first night with these guys and I gotta do this!" [laughs] But you just do the best you can and hit it. Regardless of what kind of music you play, look at it as a learning experience, because somewhere down the line you will be able to call on all those experiences, and it will help you deal with a problem, a piece of music, or a passage that you have to play. Being well-rounded really means being able to learn from every experience.



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Billy Gladstone: Pioneering The Tools Of The Trade

by Chet Falzerano

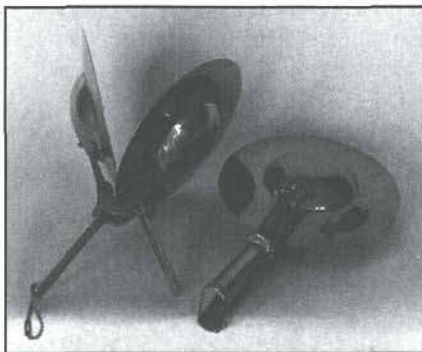
Billy Gladstone was a perfectionist, obsessed with improving both himself as a player, and the percussion world around him. Not content with fine-tuning his own incredible playing technique, he constantly searched for ways to improve the tools of his trade.

By the time he died in 1961 at the age of 68, Billy had accumulated a total of 21 patents. The patent drawings shown in this story are reproductions of the actual drawings submitted to the U.S. Patent Office.

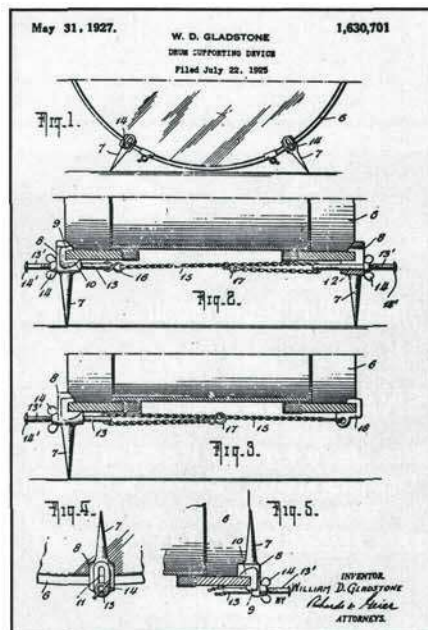
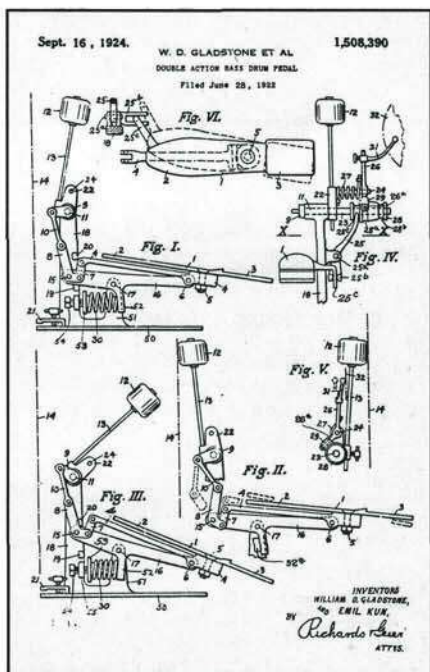
It all began in 1922, when at age 29, Billy Gladstone and Emil Kun filed for a patent on a double-action bass drum pedal. In the treatise they wrote, "Strokes may be executed by the action of both the toe or heel, enabling the player to execute the fastest passages

written for bass drum with very little effort." Though a patent for the invention was granted in September of 1924, the pedal was never manufactured.

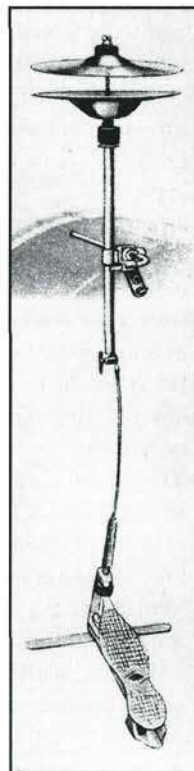
In 1925, Billy filed a patent for a hand-operated sock cymbal device designed to produce a hollow sound for certain types of jazz. The chrome-plated devices were called "Flash Cymbals," and along with adequately producing the desired sound for the music of the day, they also appealed to Billy's keen sense of showmanship. The item appears in a 1928 Leedy catalog, described as "one of the finest modern drummer's effects and flashes ever presented."



Still another idea stemming from the creative genius of Billy Gladstone in 1925 was a unique and detailed bass drum supporting device, a forerunner of our modern-day spurs.



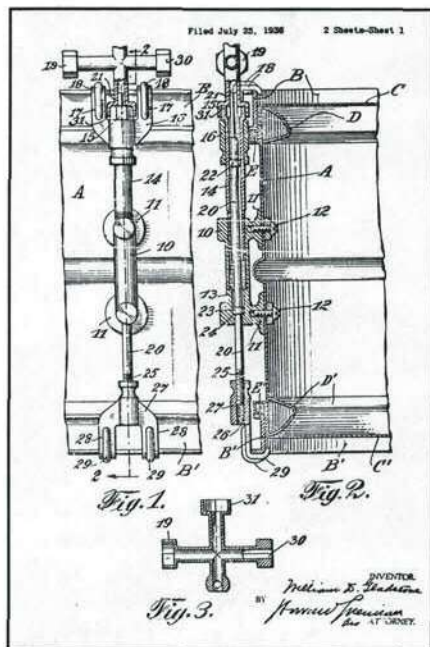
Billy later improved on the original hi-hat design by inventing the first remote hi-hat. The "New Sock Pedal," pictured in a 1939 Gretsch-Gladstone catalog, had no floor stand. Instead the device clamped directly to the bass drum hoop and was adjustable for height and horizontal position. The pedal was entirely free and could be placed in any position the drummer found convenient and comfortable. A patent was never granted for this innovative piece of equipment that was *obviously years* ahead of its time.



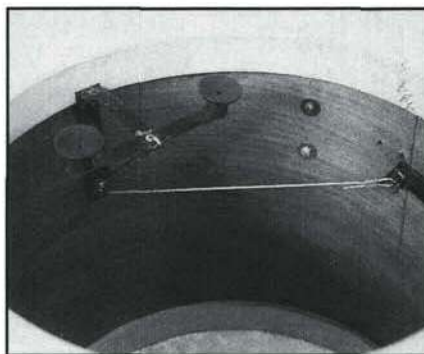
It was after Gladstone joined the Radio City Music Hall Orchestra that his patents began to receive national acclaim. In 1936 he filed the first of two patents for what has been recognized as one of his most ingenious inventions: a three-way tuning system for snare drums, which led to a partnership with the Fred Gretsch Company.

The Gretsch-Gladstone drums overcame the annoying effects humidity and temperature changes had on calfskin heads. Instead of removing the snare drum from the stand to tension the bottom head, Billy's system made it possible to tune both heads from the top, either individually or simultaneously. The drum was endorsed at the time by Chick Webb, Papa Jo Jones, O'Neil Spencer, and Shelly Manne, and listed at \$110 in the 1939 catalog.

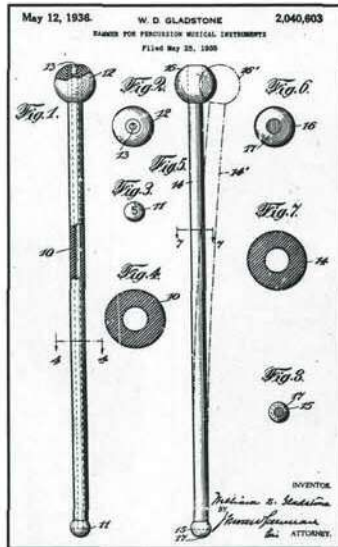
Another of Billy's ideas was employed in this drum, although he didn't apply for the patents until 1946, nine years after the drum was introduced. Basically a tone modifier, the "Finger Tip Control" (as listed in the Gretsch-Gladstone catalog) was unique. Spring-loaded rub-



her suction cups could now be flipped on or off instantly, offering a much quicker tone control than threaded knobs. Later, when Billy manufactured the drum himself, he changed to a worm gear, which provided a greater range of control. The later model also employed a graduated number plate, clearly shown on the patent drawing below. This allowed the player to return the tone control to a previously noted setting.

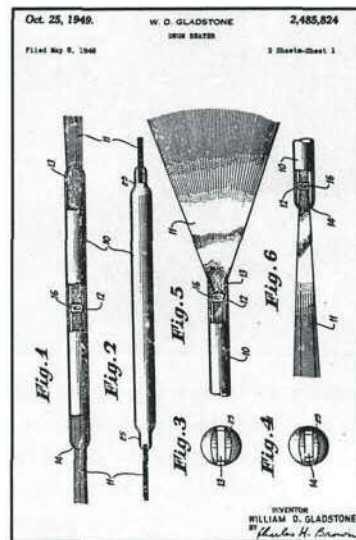


Patented in May of '36, the Gladstone "Hollow Handle Percussion Mallets" utilized hollow shafts made from vulcanized rubber and synthetic resin. This provided a better balance and uniform resilience than the commonly used rattan handles. The heads were made from rubber in various degrees of hardness for xylophone, pyralin for bells and chimes, and wound yarn for vibraphone. Color-coded tips were used to identify the various hardnesses of the heads.

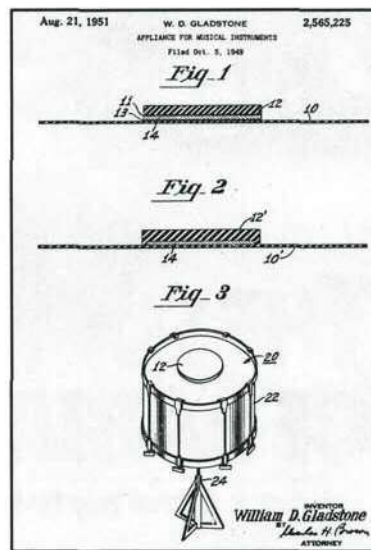
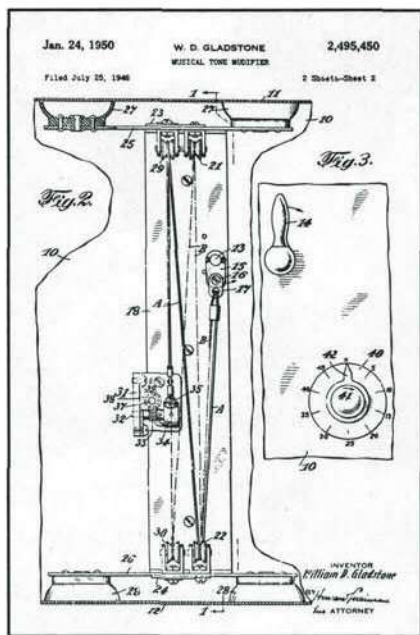


Billy was also concerned about the proper balance of brushes. His patented 1949 design eliminated the use of a rod to extend or retract the wires. Billy felt that changing the length of the rod to obtain a variable spread of wires interfered with the balance. He also noted that the movement of the rod while playing could also change the balance. To overcome this, his brush design had wires extending throughout the length of the handle, and

could be pulled from either end. By changing the aperture of each end of the handle, the desired wire spread could be achieved. Again, color coding each end identified the degree of spread.



Another patent was issued to Billy in 1951 for his still-popular practice pad. Though the pad's primary use was for practice, the patent also indicated that it could be used to muffle a drum for symphonic work, recording, or radio broadcasting. Made of gum rubber, the pad is circular and covers the entire head of the drum. An elevated center section has a metal plate sandwiched in the middle, creating a more resilient area that also provides a different tone from the thinner



outer area. A small, star-shaped cavity is molded under this plate, creating a vacuum, which holds the pad in place even during the most rigorous playing. These pads are still being sold today.

Over the years, Gladstone was also well-known for his marvelous snare drum designs, many of which are now held in private collections.



Prolific as both a performer and an inventor throughout his career, Billy Gladstone was admired by his peers and all who saw him as a supreme master of his craft. Gladstone's ideas and inventions would live on for future generations of drummers and percussionists, and his contributions to the world of percussion have made him unique in the annals of drum history.



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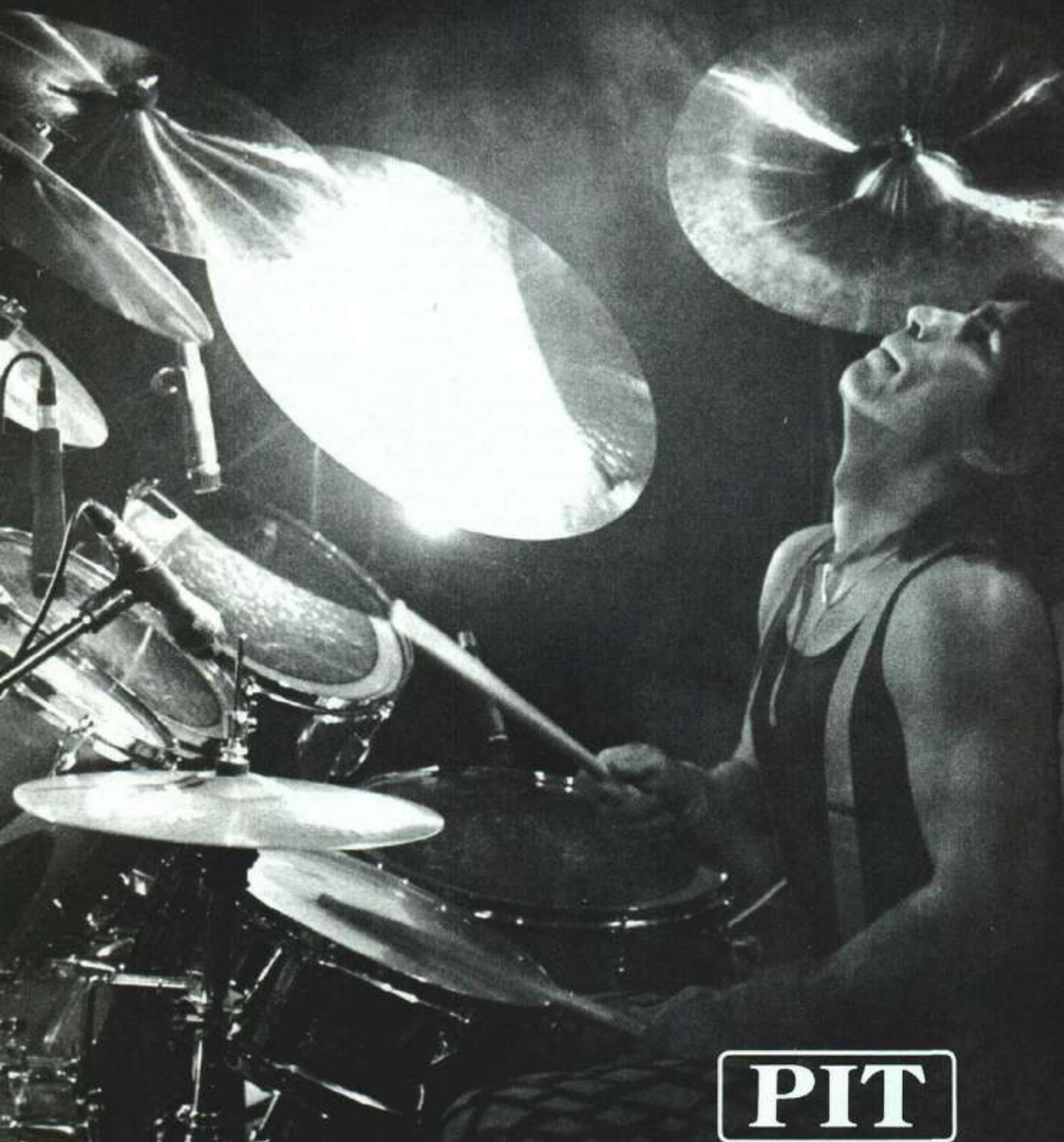
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continued from page 35

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conomic changes," explains Mike, "and in 1986 we introduced a completely new range of pro-line drumsets, *Artstar II* and *Granstar*, and we phased out the *Superstar* line. The *Granstar* series featured pastel colors for both covered and uncovered shells. We also completely redesigned the look of the hardware on the drums. The new lines were well-received, and in June of 1986 we received an award from the readers of *Modern Drummer* as the most innovative acoustic drum company. [The company received this award again for the second straight time in 1989.—ED.] So where we are today is *Artstar II* at the top, then *Granstar* and *Granstar Custom*, and then *Rockstar*, which is the name we gave to the *Swingstar* line when we upgraded it a few years ago."

As Tama developed their drum lines, they also developed associations with major drumming figures. Perhaps the most important of these was Billy Cobham, whose influence led to the development of the *Superstar* series, oversized drum and cymbal stands, and certain other specific items. Other artists, such as Stomu Yamash'ta, Elvin Jones, Lenny White, and Stewart Copeland also made important contributions to the company's early development. Tama's association with their artist endorsers is especially important to them, since they've never had the "drummer at the top" structure that some other companies have. But Mike Shimada sees this as an advantage, rather than a disadvantage.

"Joe Hoshino is very talented at having unique ideas. We also have very talented engineers in the factory. Most of them

are not drummers at all. We often think that if you are specialized in one product—and the drum category is so narrow—your concern is toward certain limited areas. Quite often something will be only one or another person's preference. Tama is always trying to combine the demands of the specialists—the drummers—with an industrial 'wide-open-mind' concept.


"The important point is that while we should never vary too far from the drummer's needs and taste, we still need to offer something different. And sometimes it's very difficult to get that something different from people who are drummers and see things as drummers do. The same thing is true in guitars. Leo Fender never played guitar; but he set dozens of industry standards for the design and construction of guitars."

R&D And Innovations

In a sense, Tama has their own Leo Fender, in the person of Naohiro Yasuda. According to Mike Shimada, "When we decided to change the name from Star to Tama and to try to create a product with its own identity, we were hampered by the fact that we had no person with the engineering background to supervise R&D [research & development] for us. But in 1975 we found Mr. Yasuda. Since then, R&D has been a very important part of the Tama operation. We are constantly trying to convey the image of Tama as an innovative, experimental brand. It's a combination of input from drummers and the pure engineering point of view contributed by Mr. Yasuda and his assistants.

"When Mr. Yasuda joined Tama, he

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looked at many different products—not only ours but other companies' as well—and felt that the level of engineering mechanics and the systems being used were far below the standards of other product categories. For example, he couldn't understand why a drummer had to use a pair of pliers on a wing bolt to get his stand tight enough. Drummers had gotten *used* to the poor quality of stands that were available; they didn't *know* any better. But Mr. Yasuda could see the problem with fresh eyes. So he came up with the nylon constriction bushing that we were the first to use. As another example: Joe Hoshino showed Mr. Yasuda a photograph of a drummer who had custom-made some accessory stands in a very primitive way, using tape and wire to hold things together. When Mr. Yasuda saw that, he said 'Oh, do drummers want this kind of flexible setup? I think I can come up with a better way to create that.' The result was the *Multi-Clamp*, which caught on so well that every drum company in the world now offers several versions."

The creative thinking exhibited by Mr. Yasuda and his staff—along with the input of Tama's artist endorsers—has resulted in literally dozens of patents granted on new or improved items. A quick—and incomplete—list includes *Octobans*, the *Gong Bass*, *Omni-Lock* tom holders, *Touch-Lock* stand height adjustments, the *X-Hat* auxiliary closed hi-hat holder, the *Power Tower* rack system, and *Titan Stilt* hardware.

From 1974 until 1988 the efforts of Tama's R&D department were mainly focused on modifying or improving existing products. But late in that year

they received a directive from management: Make a *new* hi-hat stand—one unlike anything ever made before. So Mr. Yasuda questioned drummers as to what their ideal was in a hi-hat, and learned that they wanted a light pedal downstroke action with a fast return.

Unfortunately, those two qualities require completely opposing forces. In order to overcome this problem, Mr. Yasuda turned to the principle of the lever. His design for Tama's *Lever-Glide* pedal incorporated a longer-than-usual amount of pedal travel, using leverage to create a light feeling on the downstroke, while allowing for the use of a fairly strong spring for a quick return. Also, the pedal can float a bit forward without creating sideways torque on the downrod, reducing the friction that can bind the action of the hi-hat.

Not restricting his creativity to the major elements of a hi-hat's design, Mr. Yasuda also came up with a permanently attached tilter for the bottom cymbal. Since it's a molded assembly, there are no loose felt or metal washers to fall out in a trap case, as can happen with many hi-hats. This small innovation illustrates a major point of Tama's design philosophy, which Mike Shimada explains.

"Bottom tillers for hi-hats have been made in the same way on every brand for about 20 years. When any part stays the same for 20 years, it means that either the part is perfect, or the manufacturer doesn't care. We don't operate on that principle. We constantly challenge other people's ways of doing things—along with our *own* ways of doing things—just to make sure that we're doing it the best that we can at any given time."



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continued from page 46

tableinchromatichalfstepsand/or1/64 semi-tone increments. "Stack volume" sets the individual amplitude for each layer, thereby allowing you to freely blend each instrument within a range of 0 to 127. "Stack pan" sets the initial pan position of each layer, ranging from a setting of -7 (hard left) to 0 (dead center) to +7 (hard right).

The "delay" parameter gives you the capability to delay the time between MIDI note-on reception and the actual onset of the instrument's sound. This is useful for creating delay effects, or to fatten up the overall sound of a stack.

"Sound start" lets you set a point within the sample's envelope where the actual triggering of the sound occurs. Applying this parameter after the very beginning of a sample allows for the removal of the attack portion of the sound, yielding a softer, smoother timbre. The further into the sample you start, the less identifiable the remaining portion is. This can be extremely effective for building a custom-stack from scratch. You might blend the end portion of one sound with the attack part of another

sample, for example. Each layer can also have its instrument played backwards by turning on the "Reverse" parameter.

Each sample and waveform in the *Procussion* contains its own preset "volume envelope," which can be described as the overall shape of the sound. There are three components to an envelope: "attack" (the time required for the sound to reach full volume from the point of being triggered), "hold" (the time the envelope will remain at full volume before beginning to fade), and "decay" (the time required for the envelope to fall to a level of 0). The *Procussion* gives you the ability to alter this volume envelope for each layer within a stack by using the "Alternate envelope" parameter.

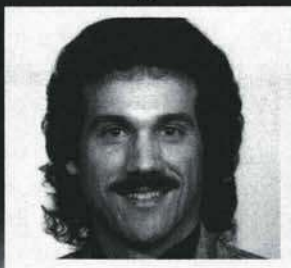
The "Pitch envelope" parameter allows you to pitch-bend the decay stage of each sample or waveform, sweeping either up or down. (This is especially effective for simulating classic Simmons-type analog drum sounds.) Two sub-parameters allow you to program the direction of the sweep and the amount of change to be applied.

An LFO (low frequency oscillator) is a waveform that repeats itself at a slow rate. One available LFO per stack can be routed to produce either vibrato (when routed to pitch), or tremolo (when routed to volume). There are four different LFO waveshapes available: triangle, sine, sawtooth, and square. You are able to select which waveshape to use, whether to apply it to any individual layer within the stack or to all layers, whether to affect the volume or pitch, and how much to apply (within a range of -128 to +127; a negative value will invert the waveform used). Experimentation with LFOs can produce some striking results.

Stack Modulation

Stack modulation is one of the most powerful features of the *Procussion*. "Modulation" in *Procussion-talk* means to dynamically produce a change. By using a variety of performance parameters—such as velocity, trigger speed, and various MIDI controllers—you are able to modulate many different aspects of the stack's sound, such as dynamics, tuning, sound length, and pan position.

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In the *Procussion*, two components are necessary to produce a modulation: a "source" and a "destination." The available sources are: Velocity (how hard a key or pad is struck), Key Number (a numeric number generated at the start of a sound), Trigger Tempo (fluctuations in tempo), Random (a random number is generated at the start of a sound), MIDI Controller (any type of MIDI controller data; four are available at a time), Keyboard Pressure (monophonic aftertouch, which is pressure applied to a key after initially triggering a sound), Pitch Bend Wheel (from a keyboard), LFO (generates repeating waves) and Envelope Generator (generates a programmable contour that changes in time as a sound is played). There are also footswitch sources that can be programmed to switch Sustain, Alternate Volume Envelope, Alternate Volume Release, and Sound Reverse. (Since the *Procussion* does not have footswitch inputs, footswitch commands are sent over MIDI from the MIDI controller being used [*drumKAT*, *Octapad*, keyboard, etc.].)

The available destinations are: pitch, volume, accent, attack, hold, decay, pitch envelope amount, pitch envelope decay, pan, tone, sample start, LFO rate, and LFO amount. The *Procussion* can produce a modulation effect on any of these destination parameters, either at one individual layer per stack, or upon all layers collectively (except with the LFO, since only one LFO is available per stack). A "Patch" is the term used for routing a source to a destination. An amount within the range of -128 to +127 must be programmed in order for a modulation to occur. You have complete freedom to route up to four sources simultaneously to any four destinations, so a little experimentation will yield some interesting effects.

As if all this were not enough, the *Procussion* also responds to MIDI real-time controls from keyboards, including: modulation wheel, breath controller, foot pedals, portamento time, data entry sliders, and volume sliders. Within each kit you may assign up to four MIDI controllers to four of the aforementioned destinations. Remember, all of this con-

trol is available per stack, and you may have up to 24 stacks per kit!

Switch Mode

"Stack footswitch" mode allows the user to switch between layers within the user-programmable custom stacks. By routing the two stack level footswitches to any of the destinations, the user can freely switch the sustain, select an alternate envelope, or reverse the envelope—in any layer or all four layers.

The "super switch mode" allows the user to switch between the layers in a custom stack by using a control input such as velocity, trigger rate, random number, MIDI controller position, or footswitch position. Two "switch groups" allow for individual four-way switching (layers 1/2/3/4) or two-way switching, pairing layers 1 and 2 together and 3 and 4 together. There are five modes of operation here, which are: "Random 1 and 2," "Alternate 1 and 2," "Hi-hat," "Threshold," and "Crossfade."

"Crossfade" allows for a gradual fading between layers depending upon where the layer switch points are pro-

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grammed. "Threshold" mode works in a similar manner, but does not utilize a gradual fade. Instead, the switch points yield an immediate, abrupt change between layers. "Hi-hat" mode simulates an actual hi-hat pedal, allowing for realistic hi-hat performances. The only control source that can be used is a MIDI controller, and only one hi-hat mode may be assigned per kit.

The "Alternate 1" and "Alternate 2" modes allow for simulating the multiple timbral shadings possible on an acoustic instrument. For example, you can program a custom stack so that all four layers utilize the same snare sample, yet each layer contains subtle nuances and shadings. (This can be accomplished by using variations in attack, hold, decay, tuning parameters, etc.). The "Random 1" and "Random 2" modes work in the same manner, but differ in that layers 2, 3, and 4 trigger randomly instead of consecutively cycling through, as occurs with the Alternate modes.

Each parameter and related sub-parameter functions in direct relation to individual sound stacks. But these stacks need to be organized together and assigned into "kits" in order for the *Procussion* to be played. This leads us to "Zones."

Zones

"Zone" is the term applied to stacks at the kit level. Anywhere from 1 to 24 zones (stacks) may be assigned per kit, with various parameters assignable independently to each. These parameters include: Stack select, Key range, Zone tuning, Zone volume and pan, Nontranspose, Assignment mode, Zone submix, and Modulation enable.

The "Stack select" parameter lets you choose from one of the 548 factory stacks, or opt to build one from scratch. You can then assign the stack to any continuous span of keys across a keyboard, ranging from a single key to the entire MIDI note range of 0 to 127. The original pitch of the stack will be automatically assigned to the exact center of the key range selected. Zones may overlap one another, but only two zones may be assigned to the same key. Since each stack can be comprised of up to four samples/waveforms, and two zones

(stacks) can be assigned per key or pad, your kits may contain multiple keys/pads that can trigger up to eight sounds simultaneously. As previously mentioned, there are a total of 128 kits in memory, of which 64 (#64 - #127) are user-programmable. Factory kits (#0 - #63) cannot be user-modified. However, they *can* be copied to a user location via the "Kit copy" function, and then altered.

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After assigning a key range to a stack (thereby creating a zone), you can re-tune the stack to your liking. The *Procussion* gives you a four-octave range in which to re-tune a zone, using chromatic half steps (coarse tune) and/or 1/64 semitone steps (fine tune).

The "Nontranspose" parameter turns off the "tuning function" of a zone, thereby playing back the stack at its original pitch only. Simultaneously playing two or more keys within the zone with "nontranspose" turned on will layer the stack, yielding a thicker, more powerful sound.

"Zone volume" sets the overall volume

for a zone, overriding the stack's individual volume. This function allows for balancing the volume settings for all zones within the kit, compensating for the relative volume differences between stacks. "Zone pan" sets the initial pan position for each zone in the kit. This parameter overrides the pan settings made at the stack level.

The "Modulation enable" parameter simply turns the Modulation 1 and 2 routings on or off for each zone in the kit. Since these modulation routings affect the entire kit, this parameter allows for independent settings at the zone level. For example, you might want Modulation 1 to route velocity to volume, yet have the snare and bass drum zones remain unaffected. This can easily be accomplished by turning off the individual Modulation 1 settings at the snare and bass zones, leaving the other zones turned on.

Zone Maps

This feature allows you to create an individual block diagram (map) of preset zone assignments, to be used as a framework for programming kits. Instead of having to assign individual zones to the locations where you want them, you can simply select a map. The *Procussion* allows you to configure and store in memory two such user maps. There are also zone maps for many different controllers preset in the *Procussion*, including: Alesis *HRI6*, *drumKAT*, E-mu *SP-12*, *Aphex Impulse*, and Roland *Octapads I and II*, *R5*, and *R8*. If you are using one of these controllers, you may simply select a factory preset if desired. I used my *drumKAT*, Dynacord pads, Drum Workshop *EP-1* pedals, and *R8* during this review, and must comment on the lightning-fast triggering response of the *Procussion*.

Assignment Mode

As previously mentioned, the *Procussion* has 32-note polyphony at its outputs. There are seven assignment possibilities, including: "Poly 32" (plays polyphonically using all 32 output channels), "Poly 8" (plays polyphonically using no more than eight channels at a time), and "Poly 4" (plays polyphonically using no more than four channels at a time)—

each with dynamic voice assignment. The dynamic voice assignment function kicks in if and when the number of sounds exceeds the number allocated. It simply cuts off and steals the channel that has been held the longest, thereby allowing a new voice to sound.

The three mono modes are "Mono" (any layer in the zone interrupts itself or any other layer, but does not affect other zones), "Layer Mono 1" (any layer in the stack interrupts itself, but does not affect other layers or zones), and "Layer Mono 2" (any layer in the zone interrupts any other layer, but does not affect its own layer or other zones).

"Exclusive 1-8" is the last assignment, where a zone's stack is assigned to one of the eight exclusive channels. Here the notes in any zone will interrupt each other if assigned to the same exclusive channel.

These mono assignments can be quite effective to help further the expressive capabilities of the *Procussion*. For example, playing a snare drum roll will use up most, if not all 32 available channels—creating a muddy overall sound.

By utilizing "Poly 8," the ninth attack will cut off the first, the tenth cuts off the second, etc. This will not only clean up the overall output sound, but will also reserve the remaining 24 available channels for other zones. For realistic hi-hat performance, using one of the three mono assignments will allow a closed hi-hat sample to cut off an open hi-hat sample within the same stack (via use of the switch group functions). With use of an exclusive channel, you could have a choked crash cymbal stack (zone) cut off the sustain from a crash previously triggered.

Zone Submix

The zone submix outputs allow each zone to be independently assigned to the output jacks with a flexible routing structure. Instead of directly routing a sound to one of the outputs, the *Procussion* gives you an extensive submixing system utilizing 16 submix channels. Also available is a "layer" function that serves to direct each layer in a stack to a separate output jack. When coupled with its three pairs of stereo outputs (labeled:

Main, Auxiliary 1, and Auxiliary 2), the result is a very powerful system for submixing each sound for external processing.

Master Menu

The master menu contains the functions that affect the overall operation of the *Procussion*. "Master tune" allows the overall tuning to be altered in 1/64 semitone increments; "Transpose" uses chromatic half-steps. There are ten "Global velocity curves," which allow you to tailor the *Procussion's* velocity response to the MIDI controller you are using. You may also program these velocity curves per MIDI channel, or per individual kit.

"Global trigger tempo" generates a control signal as you play. When your playing tempo exceeds the trigger tempo programmed, the generated signal can be used as a "source" to modulate any of the available "destinations." The trigger tempo can be set between 20 to 260 beats per minute. The user may alter the viewing angle of the front panel display within a range of -8 to +7; negative val-

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Also found under the master menu are: "Auto select" (a zone/stack can be automatically selected within the edit modes by playing a pad or key), "Remote edit" (a programmable set of functions that allow editing of the *Procussion* remotely via pads or keys), "Envelope mode" (a trigger or gate, which tailors the *Procussion*'s envelope response for use with either drumpads or keyboards), "zone maps" and "submix outputs" (previously covered), "Demo sequence" (a set of factory programmed sequences demoing the capabilities of the instrument), and the "MIDI modes."

MIDI Modes

The *Procussion* utilizes an extensive array of MIDI parameters. These are: "MIDI enable," "Program change information"; "Controller assign," "Foot-switch assign," "ID Number," "Data send/receive," "MIDI mode change," "Omni/Poly/Multi modes," and "Multi timbral operation."

Being multi-timbral, the *Procussion* can respond to all 16 MIDI channels simultaneously. This capability can be quite powerful for live applications, but it was also implemented with sequencing and multi-track recording in mind. In order for multi-timbral operation to be used, the *Procussion* must be set to "Multi-mode." When set to "Poly mode," it will respond to only one MIDI channel at a time. "Omni mode" lets it receive MIDI note information on all MIDI channels, while responding only to the currently selected kit.

For live performance, the *Procussion* responds to kit program change information. When playing it from a keyboard, you may assign up to six real-time control sources, using the "MIDI controller

assign" function. It also sends and receives system exclusive data to and from another *Procussion* or a bulk data storage device. You may send/receive: Master settings, MIDI program/kit maps, user zone maps, factory kits, all user kits, and individual kits.

Conclusions

The *Procussion* is an amazing instrument in every respect. From its extensive control to its incredible-sounding samples and well-implemented voice architecture, I couldn't find a single fault with it. It is as sophisticated a sound module as you could want, yet it remains the most user-friendly MIDI percussion instrument I've ever encountered. For those who might doubt the longevity of a new MIDI instrument in today's world of ever-improving technology, I strongly believe that you will have nothing to be concerned with here for a very long time. I not only suggest that you check this little gem out, but go get one for yourself. It retails for only \$995. Bravo E-mu, bravo!

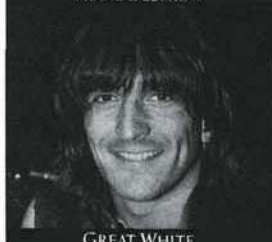


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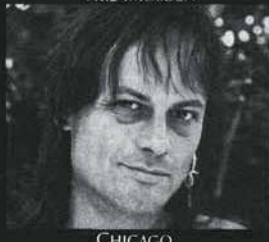
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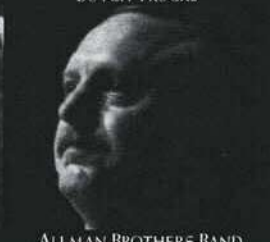
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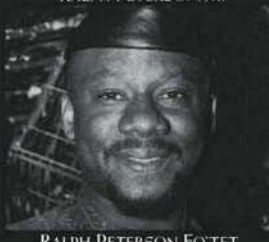
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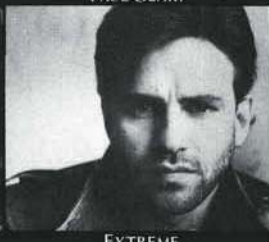
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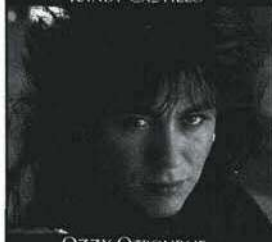
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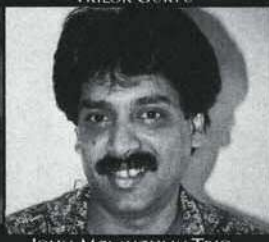
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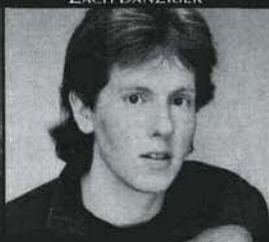
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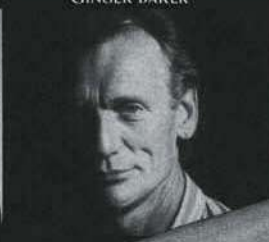


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MD Trivia Winner

Cheryl Kroeber, of Meriden, Connecticut, is the winner of *Modern Drummer's* June '91 Trivia Contest. Cheryl knew that the drummer known primarily for his double-bass work, but who also contributed to his band's recent release, *Persistence Of Time*, as a songwriter and graphic artist, is **Charlie Benante**.

For her correct answer, Cheryl will receive a complete refinishing of the hardware for a five-piece kit—in her choice of color—from Colorlife. Congratulations to Cheryl from Colorlife and *MD*.

Chicago Blues Festival

Nearly half a million blues fans from all over the world turned out for the eighth annual Chicago Blues Festival, a free, three-day festival held in Grant Park that ran June 14 - 17.

Artists who played throughout the weekend include Lil' Ed & the Blues Imperials, Little Charlie & the Nightcats, Son Seals with surprise guest Elvin Bishop, Lonnie Brooks, Koko Taylor, Junior Wells, Champion Jack Dupree, Joe Louis Walker, Jimmy Witherspoon, Groove Holmes, Betty Everett, drummer Robert Covington, Pinetop Perkins, Robert Jr. Lockwood, Frank Frost, the great Mississippi drummer Sam Carr, Taj Mahal, John Hammond, Johnny Shines, Jackie Torrence, and Jimmy Rogers with the Willie Dixon Band. (Dixon had been hospitalized just prior to the festival.) Some of the drummers who participated were Kelly Littleton from the Blues Imperials, Dobie Strange from the Nightcats, Kevin Mitchell from the Lonnie Brooks Band, and Frankie Alexander from Koko Taylor's band.

Three noted blues drummers—Carr, Sam Lay, and S.P. Leary—performed during afternoon shows. Carr played with the Jelly Roll Kings—a Mississippi Delta juke-joint band—and said the band was planning on embarking on its first-ever tour outside the Delta this fall. Lay, who made his mark in the '60s with Howlin' Wolf and with the Paul Butterfield Blues Band, and later with the Siegel-Schwall Band, backed up Little Smokey Smothers, Louis Myers, and John Primer at the fest.

Leary's appearance at the festival was a surprise, since the elder statesman of Chicago blues drummers had recently suffered a stroke and had been hospitalized. Backstage after his set, Leary said he was feeling fine and hoped to resume performing on a regular basis. "I had a little setback," smiled Leary, who is 61. "But I'm still able to keep that beat—you know, get that blues groove goin'. Hell, I've been doin' it long enough—and I ain't *done yet*."

During his long and distinguished career, Leary has played with everyone from T-Bone Walker to Elmore James and Magic Sam. His fondest memory? "There are too many to recall," he says. "But I'll tell you this: I wouldn't trade my career as a drummer for anything."

• **Robert Santelli**

HOLLYWOOD'S ROCK WALK INDUCTS LEGENDARY DRUMMERS

This past June 18, Hollywood's Rock Walk (a sidewalk gallery located at 7425 Sunset Blvd. in front of the Hollywood Guitar Center) honored seven legendary drummers "for their significant contributions to the evolution of rock as a universal art form." Alex Van Halen, Ginger Baker, and Carmine Appice placed their handprints and signatures in cement while John Bonham, Gene Krupa, Keith Moon, and Buddy Rich were honored posthumously with bronze plaques.



(Left to right) Carmine Appice, Ginger Baker, and Alex Van Halen with document declaring June 18 "Drummers' Day" in Los Angeles

Veteran studio drummer Hal Blaine was given the honor of unveiling the Rich and Krupa plaques, while Keith Moon's daughter Mandy McLaughlin and ex-wife Kim McLagan unveiled Moon's. Jeff Porcaro had the honor of unveiling Bonham's. (Porcaro had been specifically chosen to do the honors by Jason Bonham, who was unable to attend the ceremonies due to recording conflicts in England.)

In honor of the event, the Los Angeles City Council proclaimed June 18 as "Drummers' Day." The festivities culminated with a live performance by Ginger Baker and his band, Masters of Reality.

• **Pat Lewis**

DRUMTECH TEACHING STUDIOS OF LONDON MOVES LOCATION

Drumtech drum teaching studios in London has moved to a new location. Director Francis Seriau says that the studios now offer facilities on a par with the biggest and best drum schools in Europe. These include five well-equipped studios and two live performance rooms.

Drumtech's range of activities has also been expanded to include private lessons seven days a week, ten-week part-time courses of two hours per week, and full-time courses for either three months or one year. Each of the full-time courses offers instruction for 20 hours per week. Course participants are also able to take

part in live performance workshops and master classes with internationally renowned players.

In addition to Seriau, faculty members are Paul Elliott, Mark Roberts, Tristan Malliot, and Hamish Orr. Drumtech's teachers also head the drum and percussion department for the West London Institute's two-year full-time contemporary music course. Contact Drumtech at 10 Stanley Gardens, London W3 7SZ, or call 081-749-3131.



DW10+6 Maple Snares

Drum Workshop has introduced their 10+6 maple-shell snare drums. "10+6" refers to the drums' 10-ply maple shell with 6-ply maple reinforcing hoops. DW's drum department manager, John Good, says that in addition to adding strength, the reinforcing hoops in DW drums also raise pitch. "This higher pitch is critical to getting a powerful, penetrating 'crack' from a snare drum," according to Good. DW also claims that the 10+6 combination has proven efficient in absorbing impact energy. Due to DW's emphasis on the 10+6 drums, their 6+6 models have now become special-order items.

DW wood snare drums are now available in an expanded range of 4x13, 5x13, 4x14, 5x14, 6x14, 7x14, 8x14, 4x15, and 5x15 sizes. In addition, the company's line of brass snare drums now includes 4x13, 4x14, 5x14, 6 1/2x14, 4x15, and 6 1/2x15 sizes. **Drum Workshop, 2697 Lavery Ct., #16, Newbury Park, CA 91320, tel: (805) 499-6863, fax: (805) 499-7392.**

New From Impact

Impact Industries has recently made several additions to its selection of bags, cases, and accessories. *Cymbal Pockets* are cushioned dividers that fit into any brand's models of bag or hard-shell case. Two models are available: one for bags (six dividers attached together), and another for cases (six individual dividers pre-punched to slide over a mounting post). Up to seven cymbals can be stored in each, and both will fit into cases or bags 20" - 24".

Impact also offers a 2"-thick foam option for their square snare drum cases, completely protecting the shell, heads, and snare mechanism. In addition, the company now offers 21 models of percussion mallets, along with a *Mallet Selection Guide* that aims to assist dealers, band instructors, and percussionists in choosing the correct mallets.

Finally, Impact has expanded its case and bag selection to five lines, including

the top-of-the-line *Black Deluxe* hard-shell case, *Grayline* molded case, and *Impact Vinyl*, *Impact II*, and *Signature* (black *Tolex* with heavy padding) bags. **Impact Industries, Inc., 333 Plumer St., Wausau, WI 54401, (715) 842-1651.**

Oberheim Drummer



Oberheim's *Drummer Interactive Drum Pattern Sequencer* is a drum machine brain that controls the drum sounds in an external MIDI source, such as a keyboard, synth module, or drum machine. Oberheim claims that it is the first MIDI percussion device to intelligently interact with the player.

About the size of a drum pad, the *Drummer* can play 100 different beats, each with 100 different feels. The beats and feels are combined using a proprietary technology that keeps each variation "musically intelligent."

The *Drummer* also allows the player to edit any pattern or record new patterns. It can follow the player's technique and dynamics, such as changing percussion sounds with changes in volume (full snare to sidestick, for example). It also plays "intelligent" random fills and can inject grace notes and accents where they are musically appropriate. **Oberheim/Gibson Labs, 13345 Saticoy St., N. Hollywood, CA 91605, tel: (818) 503-0631, fax: (818) 503-0124.**

Updated Calato Logo

In a move to expand, upgrade, and update their corporate image, Calato Mfg. has announced it will immediately begin shipping all Regal and Regal Tip drum-

sticks with their new "Stickman" silk-screened logo. "We felt that a new look was in keeping with our ability to accommodate new directions in drumming," explains Calato's sales and marketing director, Carol Calato. **Calato Mfg., 4501 Hyde Park Blvd., Niagara Falls, NY 14305, tel: (716) 285-3546, telex: 703882.**

New Sonor Drums And Hardware

Sonor has recently introduced several new items to its catalog. In the drum department, Sonor's *Signature Series* "Special Edition" drums feature 12-ply maple shells, seamless *Megahoops*, bubinga wood finish, and *Protec* series hardware. *Symphony Series* snare drums feature die-cast rims, 10 rods per side, *Snap-Lock* tension security, tubular style lugs, and genuine calfskin heads. *Force 3000* drums have 9- and 11-ply birch shells, high-gloss finishes, tubular-style cast chrome lugs, and double-braced chrome hardware.

New Sonor hardware includes the company's *AX-HAT* auxiliary hi-hat, which features an adjustable compression spring tensioned at the bottom and a seven-position cymbal tilter. The company's new *Super Lock* is designed to prevent tension rods from loosening, is available in packages of 20, and will fit any drum company's drum rods. **Sonor c/o HSS, Inc., Lakeridge Park, 10 Sycamore Dr., Ashland, VA 23005-9998.**

Ludwig Stick Bag

Ludwig has introduced its new *L-398* stick and mallet bag. Constructed of woven polyester fabric, the bag features a foam-lined interior, a double-stitched carrying handle, three large inside pockets, and a large, zippered pocket on the outside. **Ludwig Industries, Inc., P.O. Box 310, Elkhart, IN 46515, (219) 522-1675.**

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New Meinl Raker Cymbals

Meinl's *Raker* cymbal line is now made with a modified material, hammering process, and finish. New size additions to the line include 13" medium hi-hats, 13"

Sound Wave hi-hats, a 14" crash, a 17" heavy crash, a 22" heavy ride, and an 8" splash. Raker cymbals also come in sets. The *RMS* set contains 14" medium *Sound Wave* hi-hats, a 16" crash, and a 20" ride. The *RHS* set contains 14" heavy *Sound Wave* hi-hats, a 16" heavy crash, and a 20" heavy ride. **Roland Meinl Musikinstrumente, Postfach 1549, An den Herrenbergen 24, W-8530 Neustadt a.d. Aisch, Germany, tel: 0 9161 7880, fax: 0 9161 5802, telex: 624023.**

Premier Tendura Marching Heads

Premier has developed a new "woven fabric"-type marching batter head. The material is called *Tendura*, which Premier claims is 30% stronger than other fabrics currently being used. The makers say that even though the material is stronger, since it's only laminated on the top side, there is still a good "plastic-like" feel,

which makes it easier on players' arms and wrists. **Premier Percussion, USA, Inc., 1263 Glen Ave., Suite 250, Moorestown, NJ 08057, (609) 231-8825.**

Additions To Ensoniq EPS-IB Plus Library

Recent additions to Ensoniq's library of sound releases for their *EPS-16 Plus Digital Sampling Workstation* include the *SL-1* (Hi Fi Drum Kits). Like each volume in the series, the *SL-1* includes five disks, a manual that highlights details of the recording session for the sounds, performance notes, and tips for editing the sounds. Each collection also includes custom programmed effects settings and special demonstration banks with sequences showing idiomatic uses of the sounds. **Ensoniq Corp., 155 Great Valley Parkway, Malvern, PA 19355, tel: (215) 647-3930, fax: (215) 647-8908.**




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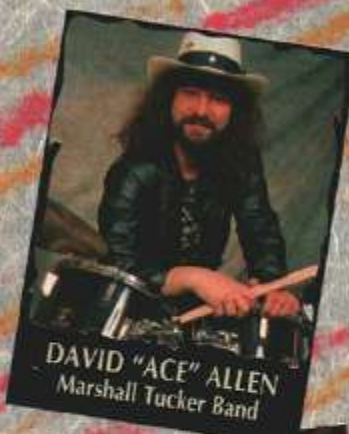
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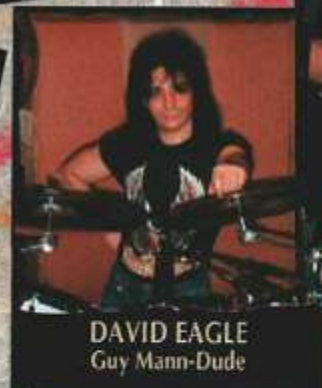
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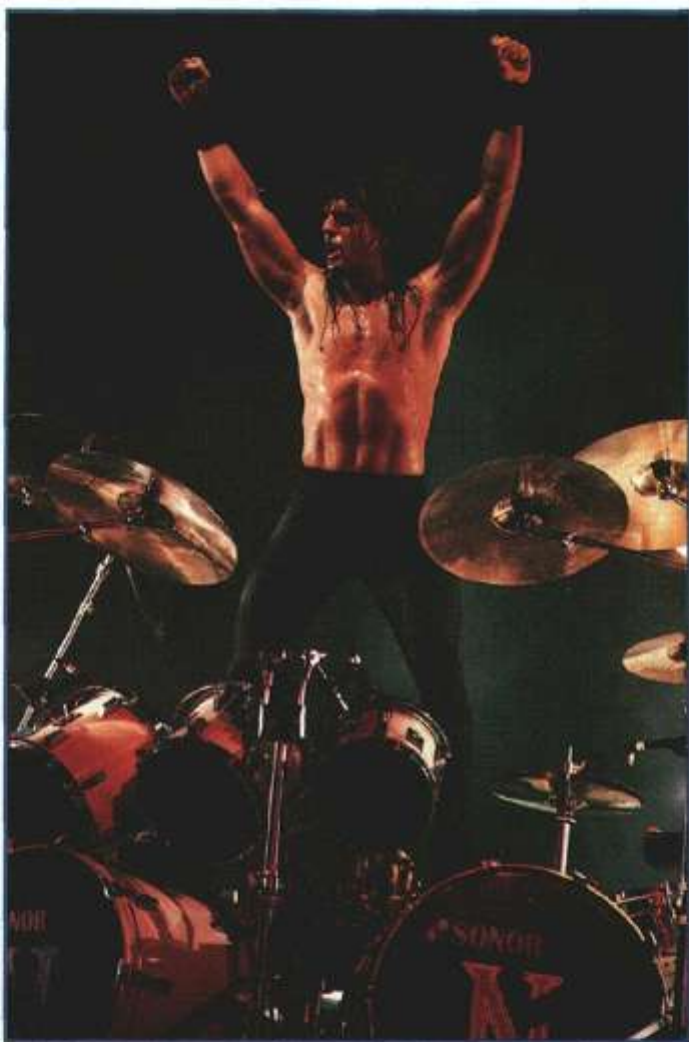


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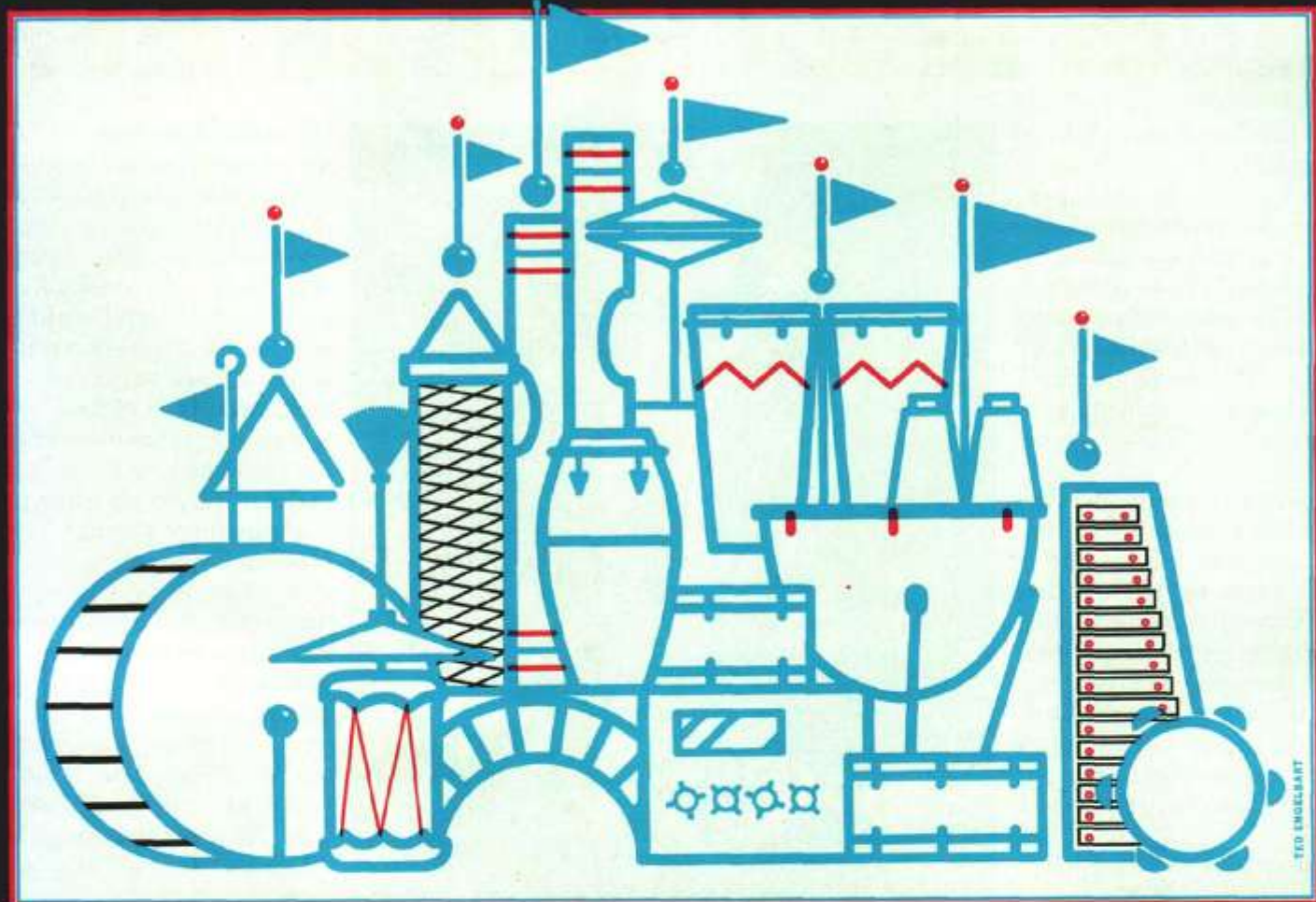
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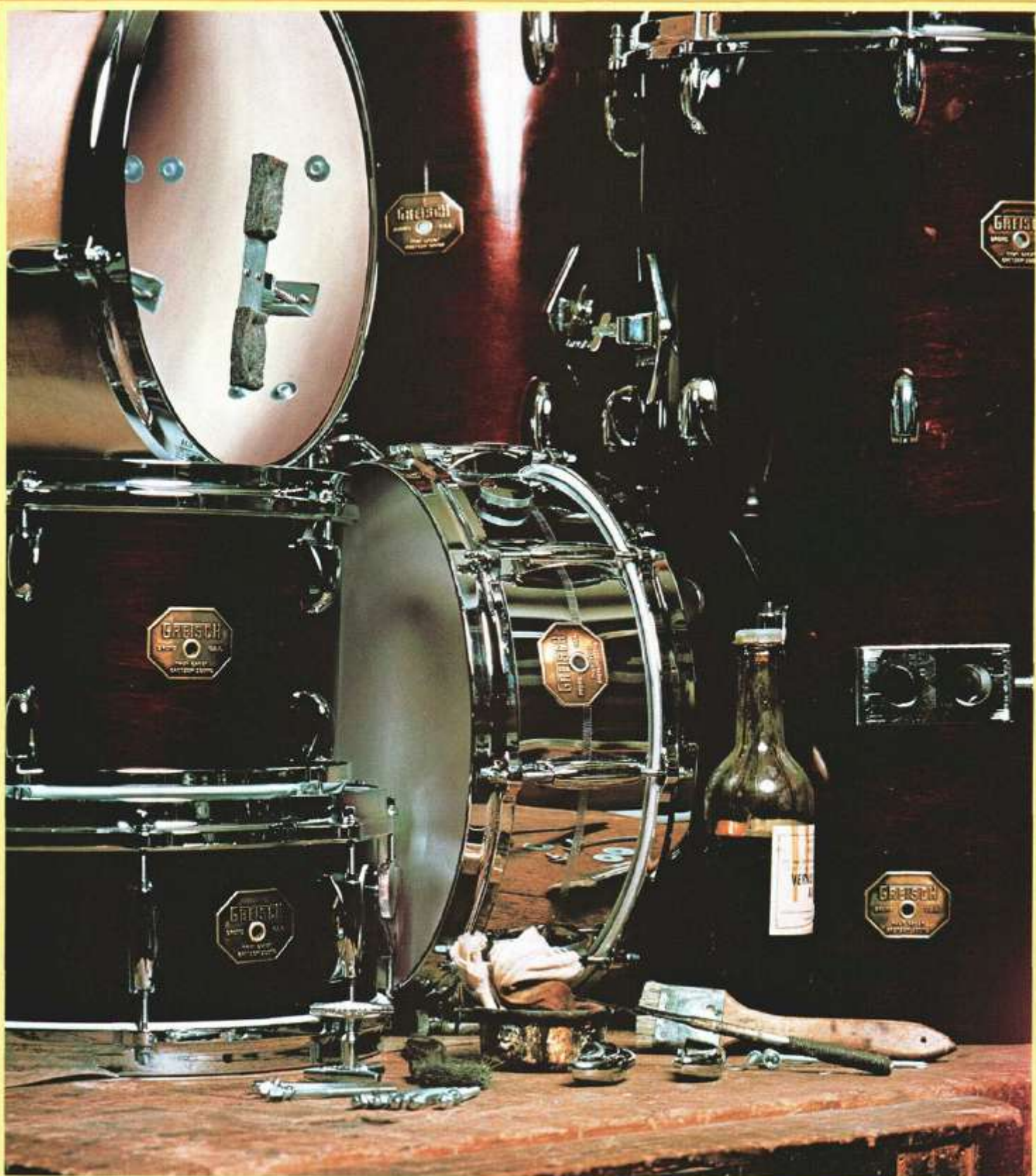
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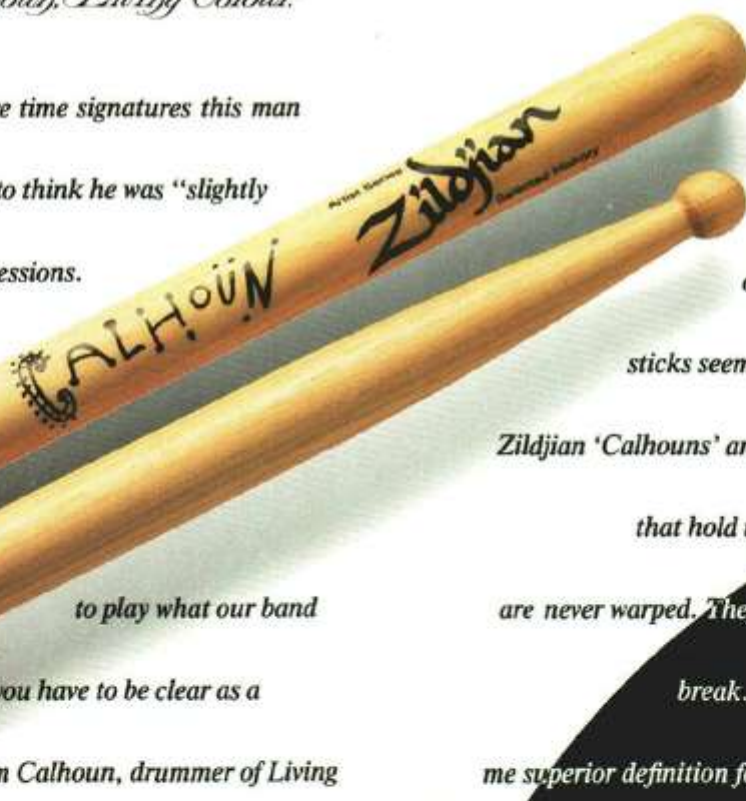
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William Calhoun, Living Colour.

Some of the out-there time signatures this man plays could lead you to think he was "slightly altered" during the sessions.

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your lifeline to the drums—they've got to

be tooled just right or you can't extract the sounds

you want out of the

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sticks succeed where

others don't? "Some other

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me superior definition for my ride cymbal patterns."

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about buying another stick? "Just Say No."

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